Spinoza

ADDRESSES AND MESSAGES
IN COMMEMORATION OF HIS
TERCENTENARY

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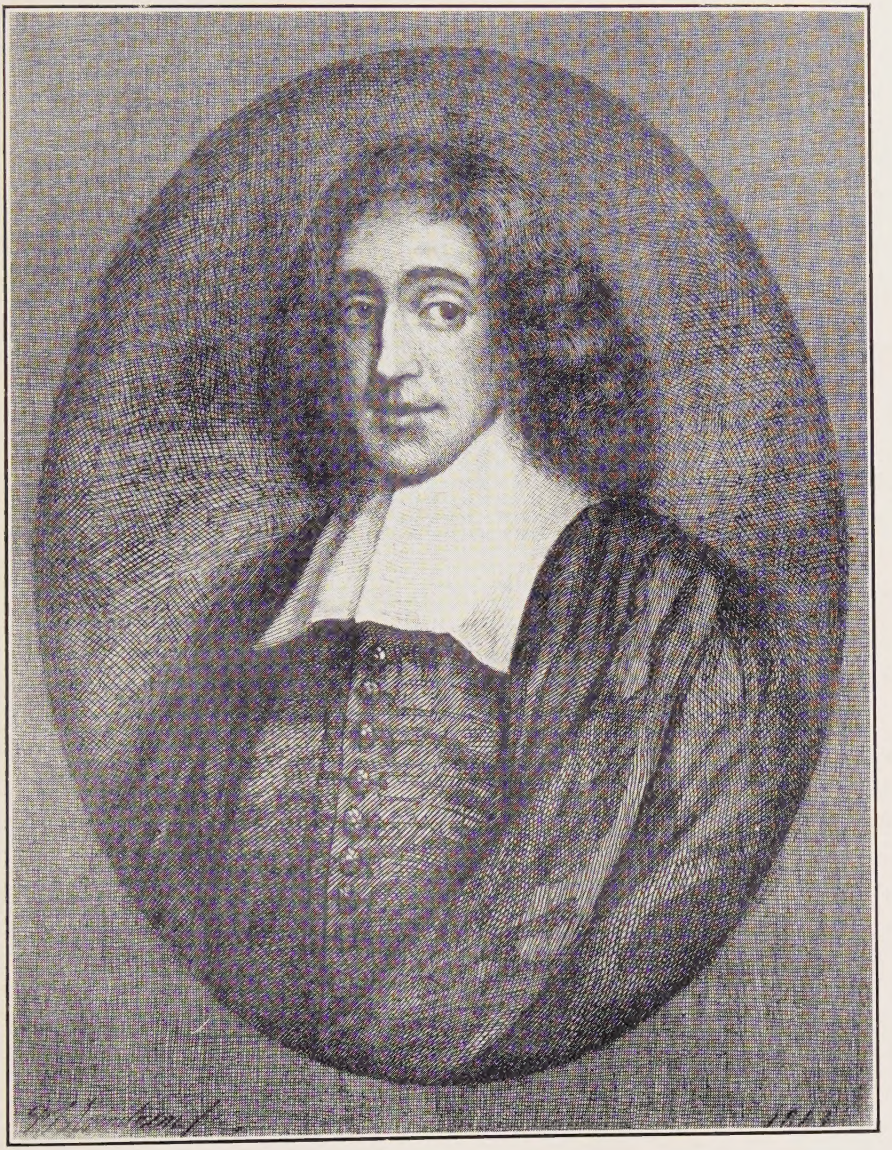

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Baruch Spinoza

Addresses and Messages Delivered and Read at the College of the City of New York on the Occasion of the Tercentenary of Spinoza, November 23rd, 1932.

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INTRODUCTORY NOTE

The addresses and messages that follow were prepared for the Spinoza Tercentenary celebration held by the Spinoza Institute of America at the College of the City of New York on November 23, 1932, under the chairmanship of President Frederick B. Robinson, president of the College of the City of New York. The growing consciousness of the commanding personality of Spinoza and the increasing recognition of the significance of his philosophy today, found further confirmation in the fact that over twelve hundred people attended that celebration.

These papers are not offered as an integrated exposition of Spinoza's philosophy. The primary purpose is that of paying tribute to a transcendent genius, who, while insisting on the rightful claims of our intuitive vision, nevertheless, championed the cause of Reason and the power and dignity of the human intellect.

In response to many requests from those attending the celebration, the addresses, though designed for a specific occasion, are now offered in this form in the hope that the interested public will find this booklet an introduction to his thought and a stimulus for a more adequate appreciation of his philosophy.

We have appended an illuminating essay on Spinoza and Judaism by Harry Waton as that paper emphasizes the Jewish nature and orientation of Spinoza's thought and shows the identity of Spinoza's system with the spirit of explicit Judaism.

The address on the founding of the Spinoza Institute, originally delivered by Harry Waton on December 18, 1927, is included in this collection. We believe that the plea "to make the idea of the philosophy of Spinoza the ruling idea of the life of mankind" is a challenge to those who have not lost their reason in a world of chaos and disillusion.

WHY HONOR SPINOZA?

Dr. I. H. Muraskin

President, Spinoza Institute of America

The Spinoza Institute of America, organized for the purpose of fostering an interest in and appreciation of the life and philosophy of Spinoza, has cheerfully accepted the obligation and privilege of arranging, with the kind cooperation of our distinguished guests, this tercentennial celebration, to do honor to the memory of that great thinker, whose name this Institute has proudly adopted—Baruch Spinoza.

That we have grown nearer to a just appreciation of the greatness of Spinoza is shown by this splendid gathering tonight. Two hundred years ago, Spinoza was the object of contempt; a century ago he was regarded generally with indifference, for his bicentenary was not celebrated; fifty years ago, tardy recognition came; today the cultured world honors him—more it appears to me, out of regard for his personality than for any just appreciation of his philosophy. Be that as it may, progress begins first at the periphery and in time moves toward the center. We are drawn first to the man, later to his meditations.

Sitting here for these exercises, the thought must have occurred to you, "Why have we selected Spinoza from out of the great philosophical firmament as worthy of this honor?" No doubt his life and personality fascinate us. The qualities which we admire in him—his serenity, his exalted religious feeling, his profound intuition into the human soul are, indeed, qualities that strike a responsive chord in our very essence.

If we imagine, however, that our selection of Spinoza was an act of free choice—we entertain a naive illusion. No man accepts another's philosophy of life unless the borrower potentially and implicitly already thinks and feels as the philosopher does. All a philosopher can do is to bring to fullest development and perfection what is vague, crude, imperfect and embryonic in ourselves. Of course, we are conscious of our likes and dislikes, of

our feelings and our thoughts, but as Spinoza observed, we are not conscious of the cause of such thought and feelings. If we are drawn to Spinoza, it is because our nature responds to his philosophy and our mind finds completion in his intuitive and rational insight. This, however, presupposes that we ourselves have grown to that degree of maturity to be able to recognize the power of reason and feel the desire to live by its light. Whether, in point of fact, we do have that innate capacity and that desire depend not upon ourselves but upon a power beyond us.

Spinoza tells us that the more reality a thing has the more attributes belong to it. By the same token, the depth and profundity of Spinoza's philosophy is to be judged by the multiform characteristics that it possesses. A scientific mind, like Einstein finds in Spinoza, a Spinozistic conception of God and makes as his own the postulate of determinism. A legal mind like that of Sir Frederick Pollock, finds in the logical structure of Spinoza, the configuration of a "habit of mind," a quickened perception of the relation of premise and consequence. An intuitive mind rejoices in Spinoza's clear seeing of the absolute, infinite and eternal.

You will readily note that the rounded system of Spinoza is capable of satisfying our entire nature. We respond only to the extent of our own apperception. Spinoza long ago recognized this truth when he remarked that the knowledge we have of a thing reflects our own nature rather than the nature of a thing.

Our limitation should not conceal the fact that philosophy in the hands of Spinoza, as well as in the hands of rational human beings, is comprehensive. Rational thought envisages the ultimate derived by our intuition, develops the implications of our vision to explicitness and submits the basic principles to a rigorous analysis of reason. An enlightened philosophy like that of Spinoza, does not forget to apply the light which it so painfully and laboriously gathered to illumine our goal toward the attainment of a rational pro-social mode of life.

A proper evaluation of Spinoza's thought would be woefully inadequate and incomplete if I omitted to emphasize the concreteness of his philosophic outlook. Spinoza postulates as a dictate of reason that every one should endeavor to preserve his own being. To preserve one's own being is a virtue or power. Power, however, comes from a knowledge of one's nature—physical,

moral, intellectual. The highest power of self-preservation requires a most adequate idea of the totality of existence, i. e. the idea of God. This knowledge give us supreme, eternal happiness. In order to attain it, individually and socially, Spinoza proposes a method of revealing the true rational nature of man. This method is designed to free the mind from the vast encrustations of prejudices, fictions, illusions and passions. Where in the world literature other than in Spinoza's Ethics will you find a more concrete and explicit account of the emotions and the means for our liberation from their bondage?

If I were asked to characterize the temper of our age, I could do no better than to describe it as an age of irrationalism. Our thinkers, with rare exceptions, deny that our intellect is competent and trustworthy to know the infinite realities of existence. How can they pass judgment on reason except by reason itself? It is one thing to say that our present knowledge is limited, but it is quite another to deny to the human intellect, the power to know the ultimate nature of reality. Scientists, who scorn metaphysics, dodge this problem by asserting that the individual mind in its selective power has fitted nature into a pattern of law. They do not tell us how the individual mind got that power. Are the laws of nature fictions of the mind or are they the relations of the forms of existence? If fictions, then they are more potent than the realities themselves. Since, as Spinoza demonstrated, the order and connection of ideas in our mind agree with the order and connection of things in the external world, is it not more rational to say that the adequate perceptions of our mind are in fact true representations of reality? Spinoza drew the correct conclusion when he boldly affirmed the power of the mind to know the ultimate nature of reality. "For," says Spinoza, "it pertains to the essence of the human mind to have an adequate knowledge of the eternal and infinite essence of God." To be sure, there is a mystery in existence, but that mystery is life itself. This, as Croce has shown, is an eternal problem for thought. But this problem would not even be a problem if thought did not eternally solve it.

The concreteness of Spinoza's thought and the confidence placed by Spinoza in the potency of human reason must be stressed emphatically as an antidote to the irrationalism, ob-

scurantism and all forms of esoteric supernaturalism that are now current.

Can the study of Spinoza's philosophy stem the tide of irrationalism?

Contemplating the diseased state of present society, the answer seems to be that our efforts to arrest the disintegration of society, of which irrationalism is its reflex, are likely to be ineffective and feeble. The creeping intellectual stupor, the economic and material dislocation, the distempered nerves that have infected our spiritual outlook with irrationalism and paralyzed it with a presentiment of decline—these symptoms tend rather to disparage faith in human reason, and even threaten to engulf Spinoza's philosophy in the whirlpool of irrationalism. Sentimental and perturbed souls may insulate themselves in mystic cults and imagine that the cash nexus between man and man thereby ceases to be a fact.

Mankind now faces a dilemma. It cannot rise intellectually and morally save as it overcomes its prejudices and anti-social feelings and it cannot cast off its ingrained individualism—save as it rises to the perception of a rational ordering of existence. The consciousness of this dilemma adds poignancy to irrationalism. But like all perplexities, this difficulty can be overcome only in time, for time is the great solvent of prejudices and illusions. Only in time does our true rational nature assert itself.

Ernest Renan, in his beautiful oration at the unveiling of the Spinoza monument at the Hague on February 21, 1877, said: "Humanity indeed advances on the way of progress by prodigiously unequal steps. The rude and violent Esau is out of patience with the slow pace of Jacob's flock. Let us give time to all. We may not indeed permit simplicity and ignorance to hinder the free movement of the intellect, but let us not either interfere with the slow evolution of less active intelligences."

To have foreseen the destiny of the human race in the eventual realization of the life of Reason, is to the great credit of Spinoza and to the everlasting glory of Judaism which has enshrined this ideal in the consciousness of men.

Even if we should fail in our generation to realize the ethics of Spinoza, there is consolation to be found in having striven to attain that ideal. Consider the benefits gained: There comes to us that joy in passing to a higher perfection, and while our suffering is not eliminated, our sorrows lose their poignancy as their

mental darkness disappears, our relations to our fellow-men become more tolerant as we realize the difficulties in the way of salvation; we cast off our illusions and discover that the world no longer holds any terror for us; our wisdom indeed becomes the wisdom of life and not a meditation upon death. For what more can we hope?

SPINOZA, APOSTLE OF FREEDOM

Prof. Isaac Husik

Professor of Philosophy, University of Pennsylvania

Three hundred years ago tomorrow Baruch Spinoza was born of Jewish parents in the city of Amsterdam. At the age of 24 he was excommunicated by the Jewish Congregation of his native city for giving expression to heretical opinions. At the age of 44 years, 2 months and 27 days he died of consumption in the city of The Hague, mourned by a handful of intimate friends. His biographer, John Colerus, Minister of the Lutheran Church at The Hague, writing in 1705, some 28 years after Spinoza's death, begins as follows: "Spinoza, that philosopher whose name makes so great noise in the world, was originally a Jew." The noise he made in the world at that time gave him notoriety rather than fame. He was disowned not merely by his own people, but by the world as well. The theologians and philosophers of the day, in Holland, France, Germany, and England, vied with each other in condemning and rejecting his teachings in terms not exactly polite. Even those who had a lurking sympathy for him dared not avow it in public, so that the oldest life of Spinoza, written by one who knew him, in the year of his death or the year following, has remained anonymous and was not published until 1719. "It is surprising," he says, "that one should have to conceal himself in order to write their life (i. e. the life of great men), as if he were about to commit a crime; especially is this so if these great men have made themselves famous by views that are unusual and unknown to common souls."

And as a matter of fact Spinoza was all but completely neglected for about a century after his death. To be sure, he was not forgotten, but he was misinterpreted or misunderstood and hence was condemned as an atheist or as a materialist. And it was not until the days of Jacobi and Lessing and Goethe in Germany and of Coleridge in England,—men who (Jacobi excepted) were not professional philosophers, but who achieved fame and influence

in the world of literature—that Spinoza began to receive his due, and his influence has been growing to this day.

In view of this peculiar history one may ask, what sort of man was this Spinoza whom everybody shunned and condemned? Was he a despot who tyrannized over his subjects? Was he an industrial magnate who fed on the labor and the sweat of his poor workmen? Was he a man of undue intellectual ambition who delighted in belittling his rivals to put himself forward as alone worthy of a hearing? Was he arrogant in his attitude to his fellows, or dishonest in his dealings with them?

No, he was quite the contrary of all this. He was poor and did not bewail his poverty; he was satisfied with little. Above all he did not want to be beholden to any one for his support and declined the gifts of his friends and admirers. He worked for his living and used his leisure for meditation. He valued his time and his freedom so much that he declined an offer of a Professorship in the University of Heidelberg for fear it would curtail the one and encroach upon the other. In his dealings with his fellows, the simple minded as well as the learned, he was friendly, affable and modest. He lived the most simple kind of a life and took no active part in politics. Even his enemies could not find anything in his conduct to his discredit. His biographer Colerus, who had nothing but abhorrence for Spinoza's doctrines, was bound to testify to his exemplary character.

"The particulars of his sickness and death," Colerus writes, "have been variously reported, and have occasioned several contestations. 'Tis said, 1st, That during his sickness he took the necessary precautions to avoid being visited by those whose sight would have been troublesome to him. 2dly, that he spoke once and even several times these words, *O God, have mercy upon me, miserable sinner.* 3dly, that they heard him often sigh, when he pronounced the name of God. Which gave occasion to those who were present to ask him whether he believed, at last, the existence of a God, whose judgment he had great reason to fear after his death? And that he answered them that he had dropt that word out of custom. 'Tis said 4thly, that he kept by him some juice of mandrake ready at hand which he made use of, when he perceived he was a dying; that he drew the curtains of his bed afterwards, and then lost his senses, fell into a profound sleep and departed this life in that manner. 5thly, that he had given

express orders to let nobody come into his room when he should be near his end. And likewise, that finding he was dying, he called for his Landlady and desired her to suffer no Minister to come to him; because he was willing to die peacefully and without disputing, etc.

"I have carefully enquired into the truth of all those things and asked several times his Landlord and his Landlady, who are alive still, what they knew of it: But they answered me at all times, that they knew nothing of it, and were persuaded that all those circumstances were mere lies." And he proceeds to deny all the allegations, some of which are indeed harmless enough. "Nobody heard the words which it is said he spoke, *O God, have mercy upon me, miserable sinner*: Nor is it likely that they should come out of his mouth, seeing he did not think he was so near his death. . . . His Landlady and the people of the house knew nothing of his ordering to send away the Ministers that should come to see him, or of his invocating the Name of God during his sickness. Nay, they believe the contrary, because ever since he began to be in a languishing condition, he always expresst, in all his sufferings, a truly *Stoical* constancy; even so as to reprove others, when they happened to complain, and to shew in their sickness little courage or too great a sensibility."

But Spinoza, despite that he was a man of exemplary virtue and charity, committed the one sin against the holy Ghost, which made all else of no account. He believed in freedom and acted on his belief. He was a nonconformist in thought. Gifted with an original mind, he used it according to its own laws and followed its lead to its ultimate consequences, which were different from the beliefs and opinions of his contemporaries.

And yet he was no anarchist. He believed in Government and was loyal to the authorities of his own state. While he pleaded in his writings for freedom to think and to express his thoughts, he nevertheless believed in the right of the State to regulate and control the actions of its citizens and he concludes the Introduction to the Tractatus Theologico-Politicus as well as the Treatise itself with the identical words:

"I have written nothing which I do not most willingly submit to the examination and judgment of my country's rulers, and . . . I am ready to retract anything which they shall decide to be repugnant to the laws or prejudicial to the public good. I know

that I am a man and, as a man, liable to error, but against error I have taken scrupulous care, and striven to keep in entire accordance with the laws of my country, with loyalty and with morality."

This was no mere gesture on his part, for he was no coward. He was ready to face a raging mob who had lynched a friend of his, John de Witt, and to speak his mind to them at the risk of meeting with a similar fate; and if he did not do so, it was because his Landlord had locked the door and he could not get out.

What were the ideas of Spinoza which were regarded as so dangerous?

They concern God, man and the State. God to Spinoza is not a person residing in the heavens and from that height ruling the world of nature and of man, for an ultimate purpose that He alone knows. God can be loved, but he can not love in return. God and the whole order of nature are the same. Man is a part of this order, and the better he understands it the freer he is. The passions of man, the cause of so much unhappiness and misery, become purified and an aid to happiness by reason and understanding. To understand is to forgive, nay to understand is to realize that forgiveness is not necessary. Man makes the mistake of judging the world as a whole by reference to his welfare. He assumes that God made the world for his benefit and hence looks for purposes in nature with relation to his desires. Good and evil are to him those things which give him pleasure and pain. Hence he is puzzled by the evil in the world and speaks of the problem of evil for which he invents fanciful explanations. The true answer is to deny the problem. There are no purposes in the world as a whole, hence nothing in the world is either good or evil in the absolute sense. Man is but a small part of the universe and the universe was not made for him. Hence there is no problem of evil.

To be sure, it is the part of the wise man to make his life as pleasurable as possible and to avoid pain. But this end is not accomplished by indulging the passions, but by rationalizing them. Man's chief good is his understanding, and to understand that certain things are inevitable is to take away their sting. Also the cultivation of the understanding, and seeing things under the aspect of eternity, as Spinoza expresses it, leads to intellectual love of God.

Things are inevitable; physical phenomena as well as the order of thoughts in the mind are determined by causes going way back to infinity. In this sense there is no freedom either to think or to act. But this is not the kind of freedom that Spinoza is talking about. God, he says, is free because he acts from the necessity of his own nature, not determined from without. Man is free if he acts from the necessity of his nature, which is his understanding.

The metaphysics of Spinoza is too difficult to understand or to try to explain in a few minutes, but fortunately it is not necessary to enter upon such abstract and complicated details to appreciate something of Spinoza's spirit. He appealed, as we have seen, to poets and literary men before the philosophers began to cultivate him. His life is something we can all understand and admire, and Spinoza, himself, was not a mere theorist. He had lost his anchorage when he realized that the things most men strive for are not worth while. Hence he was looking for something stable, permanent and eternal with which he could identify himself. If he could find this, he was safe and would be saved in the religious sense. He found this eternity in God as the sum of all reality, of which man is a part in so far as the eternal part of him is concerned, namely, his understanding.

He was anxious, however, to guide others too to make the same discovery, realizing that if they did, the world would cease to be a vale of tears and we should all enjoy peace and happiness.

The popular conception of religion and the Bible, and the theologians' and statesmen's conception as well, were a stumbling block in his path. Hence he endeavored to enlighten them. The Bible was looked upon in his day as literally the word of God in every part, every expression, every word and letter. Hence all science and philosophy had to be reconciled with the Bible if they were to receive any cultivation by religious men. The result was that the interpretation of the Bible, far from giving an explanation of its meaning, became a method of mental acrobatics, trying to find therein meanings which were never dreamed of. Spinoza was one of the first to contend that the Bible must be explained from itself, and that one must not assume in advance that it is perfect in all respects, but must examine it first without prejudice and thus arrive at conclusions. This Spinoza proceeded to do and came to conclusions that were novel in his day. These

were that the Bible was never intended as a textbook of a theoretical order, teaching those matters which science discovers by its own methods. Hence we must not assume that the writers of the biblical books were, as scientists, superior to their contemporaries. Scientific errors in the Bible do not detract from its value in teaching virtue, obedience, and charity. This stumbling block gone, thought would be free. And Spinoza further proceeds to analyze the state and law and government. Here he admits theoretically that stable social life is not possible unless every member of the State gives up some of his individual likes and dislikes and submits himself to the governing power, whose right extends as far as its power. But he points out at the same time that if the sovereign desires to retain his power and maintain the State in equilibrium he can do nothing better than grant freedom of thought and speech to all the citizens.

Spinoza sacrificed all that most people hold essential to happiness for the sake of his peace of mind and for the sake of freedom to think his thoughts and live his life as he thought it should be lived. Some of us assume that he suffered through the sacrifice and we sympathize and revere his memory because we all regard sacrifice as a noble virtue. I do not think this is a true reading of Spinoza's character. This would reduce him to the level of the ordinary man who is on occasion capable of sacrificing something he holds dear for a higher cause. The importance of Spinoza lies in the fact that he was a pathfinder. He tried to show in his life and in his writings that he was not living a life of sacrifice, that the things he chose to live without were not worthwhile and that he had reached an insight and lived on a level where he was happy and cheerful precisely because he had given up those things most of us strive for. He caught a glimpse of the eternal and there found peace.

LIVING IN ACCORDANCE WITH THE PHILOSOPHY OF SPINOZA

Dr. Gabriel R. Mason

Principal, Abraham Lincoln High School

In reading the life of Spinoza, and in studying his metaphysics, the question sometimes arises whether this wonderfully beautiful and this majestically serene philosophy can be made the practical guide for our lives in these modern times. This bold query I wish to answer with an equally bold and categorical "yes."

Of course, it will be no easy matter to influence our thought and actions of 1932 by the teachings of our blessed sage born in 1632; but then, as Spinoza well says, all things excellent are as difficult as they are rare.

To make the philosophic principles of Spinoza part and parcel of ourselves, it will first be necessary to agree with him as to the goal of human existence. Like many hedonists, Spinoza also taught that in this life we should seek happiness; but this is not to be obtained by courting riches, fame, position, power or sensual pleasures. These are will-o'-the-wisps. When we pursue these phantoms, they always escape us and leave us disappointed, discouraged and disillusioned. Rather let us substitute for these a life directed by the authority of reason. Through reason we are enabled to see that Substance (Spinoza's name for the all-pervasive nature or the all-absorbing God) is the only permanent value in a world of accidental, ephemeral and changing things and thoughts. Therefore let us intellectually love God and thereby attain peace of mind, tranquility of soul and joy of heart.

In addition to this fundamental dictum, we must, if we are to live in accordance with Spinoza's philosophy, declare ourselves agnostics. We must not anthropomorphize our God. We must not limit Him or qualify Him with human traits of a magnified character. Such a view, in which we humbly and sincerely confess our ignorance, helps us, stoic-like, to get rid

of superstitions and fears, and permits us to taste of happiness supreme, eternal and unending.

We must also subscribe to the dictum of determinism. When events in this world happen, they occur for good and sufficient reasons, following the scientific law of cause and effect. Every cause must have an effect; every effect must have a cause. Events are, therefore, inevitable. Constituted as the world was, things had to occur just as they did; they could not possibly have been otherwise. As Spinoza says, things follow from the nature of Substance just as it follows, from the nature of a triangle, that the sum of the three interior angles is equal to 180 degrees; or, from the nature of a circle, that all diameters are equal.

When tragedies befall us, we must not, therefore, bewail or bemoan; we must not regret or repine; we must acquiesce with courageous stoicism and bow in submission to the inevitable changes in a harmonious Nature, with benign resignation and with philosophical understanding. When we realize that things could not possibly have been otherwise, we find that the sting of our misfortune is removed. This, as Spinoza taught, is the gospel of acquiescence which we must accept as the followers of his redeeming philosophy.

Again we must learn to look upon the world *"sub specie aeternitatis"*—under the aspect of eternity. "The world is too much with us," sang Wordsworth. We are too much disturbed by the ephemeral inconsequentials of our petty lives here and now. Rather let us, with Leonardo da Vinci, take a philosophical view of things and learn "to be spectators of all time and all space;" or, with Matthew Arnold, school ourselves "to see life steadily and to see it whole." Such a view will always give us eternal peace and genuine happiness which our hearts so much desire.

More than a score of years ago, while tramping through the Schwarzwald, fascinated by the beauty of the natural surroundings on which my eyes feasted, and the equal beauty of Spinoza's doctrine of the intellectual love of God, on which my mind meditated, I composed a few lines as an apotheosis to our sainted philosopher, the tercentennial anniversary of whose birth we are now celebrating. I conclude by quoting these lines:

"Impious wretch, vile atheist,
Why hast thou forsaken the faith of thy fathers?"

Busily grinding his lenses,
He heard these imprecations,
But he heeded them not.
His thoughts were with the One,
The all-absorbing, the all-inclusive God,
The Infinite, the eternal, the ineffable.
With the Brahmins of old,
Singing their Vedic hymns,
He penetrated the veil of Maya,
And saw only reality, saw only truth,
Behind the phantasmagoria
Of things in space and time.
A passionate longing to know God was his,
A benign resignation to life was his,
A blessed peace that passeth understanding was his.
In meditative solitude he found joy,
In pantheistic contemplation he found truth,
This "God-intoxicated philosopher."

SPINOZA AND MODERN THOUGHT

Dr. Jacob Shatzky

American Delegate to the Spinoza Congress at the Hague

I take great pleasure in welcoming you on this unique occasion and in extending to you the greetings which I brought from the meeting-place of the Spinoza Congress, the Hague, the last residence of Benedictus de Spinoza.

We are here not merely to celebrate the Tercentenary of Benedictus de Spinoza—whose significance is undoubtedly known to every intelligent man and woman.

Tonight we have gathered here not for the sake of expressing our gratitude or our admiration for the great Philosopher. That is superfluous.

It will be sufficient if we trace in general outline the unbroken influence of Spinoza upon modern thought.

In spite of its Latin garb and its almost medieval form of expression, Spinoza's philosophy is not a philosophy which should be accessible only to a limited number of individuals.

It is in accordance with Spinoza's philosophy, that the scholar should step down from the Ivory Tower and mingle freely with men in their daily affairs.

The knowledge of Spinozism should be put to the test of everyday living, because the scholar who abstractly loves truth for truth's sheer sake is somewhat like the physician who invents remedies, but dislikes to administer them to his patients.

The world in which books are read and studies are undertaken exclusively for their own sake may be a very pleasant world; but it is a singularly selfish one.

There are thoughts of Philosophers which recall the Sibylline leaves: they are profound, but they are easily lost.

However, this is not the case with Spinoza's philosophy.

Spinozism is a philosophy which has to be translated nobly into action.

This is the paradox of Spinozism: a philosophy of a static,

determined world, which can be revealed only in action, in dynamics.

Spinozism has its justification only through and for life and living, as well as thinking.

The vitality of Spinozism has been proven by the many adaptations and applications of Spinoza's teachings to theories and different political and social creeds, which in many cases are incompatible with his philosophy.

A few illustrations will suffice to show to what degree modern social and political thought is interested in the application of Spinoza's philosophy.

According to the British scholar, Prof. Gunn, Spinoza "Would support in these days a Labour Party in Parliament and an intelligent use of the vote, while condemning revolutionary policies."

An Italian professor asserts that Spinoza's philosophy of State is a typical fascist conception and, therefore, Spinoza deserves to be mentioned with Machiavelli—as the fathers of the political philosophy of Fascism.

According to Ryazanoff, Deborin, Thalheimer, Razumofsky, Bukharin and others—he closely approaches the Communist conception of State and his philosophy is the heritage of the . . . Central Committee of the Communist Party.

A brief roster of the contradictory statements made in the Spinozistic literature of the last fifty years will give a very interesting picture of the Eden of perplexity—called modern science.

Spinoza was:

A militant atheist—according to F. Mauthner.

A Catholic—according to Pater Sassen, of the Dominicans.

An evangelican Christian—according to Vloemans and Van der Tak.

Anti-Catholic—according to Pater Dunin Borkowski.

A "good Jew"—according to Klausner and Fromer.

"Anti-Jewish"—according to H. Cohen, Hirsch and others.

Assimilationist—according to Sokolow.

Zionist—according to Dr. Schipper.

Hebraist—according to Dr. Klatzkin.

Converted Jew—according to Seeligman.

Almost a Reformed Jew—according to Rabbi Heller and others.

Mystic and Kabbalist—according to Pflaum, Strauss and others.

A good Hebrew Scholar—according to Porges, Rubin.

A mediocre—according to Sokolow, Seeligman.

A "socialist"—according to Max Adler and Stern.

Aristocratic—according to Vloemans and K. Fischer.

Democrat-republican—according to Mohl, Chicherin, Ihering and others.

Spinoza was a Renaissance type according to Wilhelm Dilthey.

He was a Barocco type according to the assertions of Borkowski and Gebhardt.

He was a Descartian in the eyes of Kuno Fischer; he is strongly defended from being that in the writings of Prof. Brunschwicg.

According to Constantin Brunner, Spinoza was a "Brunnerianer"

The same can be proven with many others. His philosophy is ugliness itself to some scholars, because he leaves esthetics out of his system of philosophy.

He is founder of a new philosophy of beauty combined with Ethics—according to a new German monograph by Fr. Schlerath.

Spinoza was the father of the scientific definitions in psychology—as we read in many histories of psychology.

The behaviorists claim him as theirs.

The psychoanalysts call Spinoza—the first psychoanalyst, since he teaches us—that memory is mainly based on mental functions. (Alexander).

While the pacifists extol Spinoza as the Apostle of Peace—A French Scholar in 1915 published an unknown manuscript, supposed to have been written by Spinoza: Tractatus Bellico-Pacificus, in which Spinoza is an ardent militarist.

It is needless to remark, that this Tractatus was a forgery.

But everything: the positive as well as the negative, the almost irreconcilable views and creeds, beliefs and tenets are seeking sanction and approval under the wings of Spinoza's philosophy.

Efforts have been made to finish Spinoza's Tractatus Politicus and the "De intellectus emendatione."

I don't have to tell you that all these "superstructures" proved failures.

The history of music gives us a very instructive illustration.

Everyone who has attempted to finish Schubert's Unfinished Symphony, finished Schubert, rather than the Symphony.

The same happened with Spinoza's philosophy.

The mystic "captured" his "scientia intuitiva" the third degree (Stage) of cognition and composed cabbalistic variations on that theme—as musicians do with Bach's fugues.

This does not detract from the authors of the artificial continuations and the variations of Spinoza's philosophy—as much as it proves how deep-rooted Spinoza's philosophy is in modern science and life.

Efforts have even been made to reconcile Spinozism with religion, because modern science pretends that the law of causality in the Cosmos cannot be confirmed.

The partisans of this view deny the possibility of a deterministic conception of the philosophy—and throw a veil of agnosticism over the mysterious origin of creation, as well as of the laws of nature and thereby supply sufficient food for God-hungry individuals.

But even Einstein does not see any contradiction between physics and Spinozism. According to him, time as duration, that is, the fourth dimension, has been anticipated in Spinoza's philosophy.

We are still in the period of quests of certainty and searching for truth.

Therefore, the mere statements of facts are more important than their interpretations.

While the stating of facts creates the realm of physics; the interpretation of the same is dangerously apt to become metaphysics—when the "truth seeker" is a priori inclined to metaphysical conceptions.

It is therefore premature to draw conclusions—that physical science denies the Spinozistic conception of the Cosmos.

The very fact that Spinoza's conceptions, his metaphysics, epistemology, psychology, social philosophy, anthropology, etc. are being checked up by the modern scientists—proves the indelibility of Spinoza's philosophy, nay, his immortality.

Divested of the scholastic, medieval terminology and interpreted on the lines of modern life and science, Spinoza's philosophy manifests a unique vitality unrivaled in the history of human thought.

THE HISTORIC SIGNIFICANCE OF SPINOZA'S PHILOSOPHY

By Harry Waton

Author of The Philosophy of Spinoza

Spinoza contemplated existence in the aspect of eternity, and he dwelt in eternity. In eternity there is neither time nor space. With relation to eternity, the time when and the place where Spinoza was born are of no consequence; of consequence is the relation of Spinoza himself to eternity. To honor Spinoza, his relation to eternity must be revealed.

Eternity is not a state of rest and death, but is absolute life and infinite activity; it is the conscious activity of the Absolute in accordance with an eternal and infinite order. The Absolute goes through eternal and infinite cycles, and this constitutes the eternal history of existence.

The Absolute is absolute thought and infinite light. To bring out the world, the Absolute differentiates himself into life, will and love. He projects his infinite will, which becomes infinite extension. This infinite extension constitutes the infinite attributes of the Absolute. The infinite will, moving from the centre of the Absolute to the periphery of infinite extension, moves from absolute explicitness and supreme perfection to complete implicitness and imperfection—from infinite light to darkness. Then the Absolute projects his infinite love, which Spinoza calls the Infinite Intellect of God. The Infinite Intellect comprehends infinite extension, integrates it, and clothes it in infinite forms. Extension comprehended by form becomes a reality. Thus are brought out the stars, the solar systems and all the infinite realities of existence.

Life appears on the earth's surface; at first in the form of primordial cells, then life integrates the cells and brings out an infinite series of forms of life, one higher than the other, until man is brought into existence. Man starts as an animal, but his predetermined destiny is to transcend the phenomenal aspect of existence. The Infinite Intellect takes man in hand, raises

him ever higher, until he attains in succession to explicit reason, self-consciousness and the intellect. The intellect is the highest state of man. When man attains to the intellect, he perceives that his intellect is part of the Infinite Intellect of God; he then consciously and explicitly identifies himself with the Infinite Intellect and contemplates existence in the aspect of eternity and infinitude. He then partakes of the infinite joy with which God contemplates Himself, and this constitutes the infinite love of God. The partaking of this infinite joy constitutes the intellectual love of God.

Thus we see the eternal cycle of existence in all its infinite aspects. Creation is not from the centre of the Absolute towards the periphery of extension, but is from the periphery of extension to the centre of the Absolute; it is from implicitness, darkness and imperfection towards explicitness, light and perfection. While the will of the Absolute moves from infinite light and supreme perfection to darkness and imperfection, the love of the Absolute moves from darkness and imperfection to infinite light and supreme perfection. Viewing existence in the aspect of this eternal cycle of creation, we see how out of chaos and darkness emerged creation; we see the dawn of light and the appearance of life; we see the infinite forms of life following one another, rising ever higher towards light and consciousness, until man appears and leads all existence towards infinite light and supreme perfection. The ladder of evolution stands on the periphery of extension, but its top reaches the centre of the Absolute. The messengers of the love of the Absolute ascend by this ladder, reach God, and bring down the divine light and knowledge. From time to time a Prometheus, a Moses, a Buddha, a Jesus, came to the fore, ascended to the Absolute, and brought down to mankind divine light and knowledge. These immortals saw God face to face, but they were not privileged to reveal to mankind what they saw in a manner clear and explicit. The reason for this was that mankind was yet in a state of implicitness and semi-unconsciousness. Hence, these immortal messengers of light and knowledge were compelled to convey their messages to mankind in a language of vague symbols, which mankind never understood adequately.

Spinoza was the first man who, like Moses, saw God face to face, and who was privileged to give to mankind in a language

clear and explicit the divine light and knowledge which he brought down from the Absolute. The reason for this was that, by the time that Spinoza appeared, mankind had already attained to some degree of self-consciousness and explicit reason, and were capable of receiving the divine message in its clear light. Philosophers do not write systems of philosophy, but the Infinite Intellect speaks to mankind through the mind of the philosophers. Viewing Spinoza in this aspect, we can perceive and appreciate the historic significance of his appearance in existence. Spinoza is significant, not in the sense of ordinary history, but in the sense of the history of eternal existence itself. In him we see the stage of progress made by the Infinite Intellect through mankind in its movement towards the Absolute.

The ancient Rabbis said: He who has learned from his comrade a chapter, a sentence or even only one word, must honor the comrade. The teacher is the greatest benefactor to mankind. As Emerson says: He that feeds men serveth but few; he serveth all who dares be true. The teacher that dares impart to mankind light and knowledge is, indeed, one that deserves most honor. We, who for years have been the pupils of Spinoza, and who for years have enriched our mind with the light and knowledge radiated by the Infinite Intellect through the mind of Spinoza, and who have all along honored Spinoza by a zealous devotion to the study and spread of his philosophy, have availed ourselves of the privilege to honor Spinoza in this manifest manner. We rejoice in the privilege which we have deserved. Your presence here, and your participation in this privilege, show that you are worthy to be identified with Spinoza. May this occasion inspire you to take up the study and spread of the philosophy of Spinoza, so that this philosophy may become a "lamp unto the feet and a light unto the path" of mankind.

Tercentenary Messages from

DR. ALBERT EINSTEIN

Für Spinoza sind das Psychische und das Physische nur verschiedene Erscheinungsformen einer einheitlichen gesetzlichen Wirklichkeit. Diese Auffassung ist als wissenschaftliche erkenntnis Allgemeingut aller geistig strebenden Menschen geworden. Aber auch unsere Zeit ist noch weit davon entfernt, aus dieser Erkenntnis so konsequent die Folgerungen für das Leben zu ziehen, wie es Spinoza getan hat.

Die Erkenntnis von der kausalen Gebundenheit der menschlichen Handlungen soll uns auf eine höhere Stufe des Handelns führen, das nicht ein blindes Reagieren des Gefühls sein soll. Unser Handeln sei getragen von dem stets lebendigen Bewusstsein, dass die Menschen in ihrem Denken, Fühlen und Tun nicht frei sind, sondern ebenso kausal gebunden wie die Gestirne in ihren Bewegungen. Spinoza hat uns gezeigt, dass die Erkenntnis dieser Kausalität unserem Verstande weitgehend zugänglich ist. Spinozas Seelen-Analyse, wie er sie in seiner Ethik gegeben hat, ist deshalb von einzigartiger erzieherischer Bedeutung; es ist nichts sehnlicher zu wünschen, als dass dieses Buch auf einen immer weiteren Kreis von Menschen wirke und so sein für Individuum und Gesellschaft gleich segensreiche Wirkung ausübe.

(*Translation*)

To Spinoza the spiritual and the material are merely different manifestations of one universal, deterministic reality. This concept has become the intellectual heritage of all men who strive after spiritual values. But even our age is still very far from grasping the full implications of this concept in its application to life, as Spinoza has grasped it.

The recognition of the causal interrelationships of human behavior should lift our actions to a higher plane of conduct, which should not be subject to the irrational reactions of blind emotion.

Our behavior should be motivated by the ever-present realization that human beings in their thoughts, feelings and actions are not free agents, but are as subject to the inexorable laws of cause and effect as are the stars in their courses.

Spinoza has shown us that the comprehension of this all-embracing causality is very largely within the grasp of the human intellect. Spinoza's analysis of the realm of the spiritual, as given by him in his "Ethics" is for this reason of far reaching educational significance. There is nothing more ardently to be wished for than that this book may influence an ever-wider circle of human beings and thus exert its spiritual force on individuals and society alike.

SIR FREDERICK POLLOCK

Noted British Jurist and Spinozist

More than a half a century ago I ventured to affirm that Spinoza tends more and more to become the philosopher of men of science. Whatever audacity there may have been in saying this at the time, has, I think, been fully justified. It is not for me, but for the mastery of natural philosophy (if I may revive the antiquated but not less sound vocabulary of our ancestors) to assign the reasons; and it is not for any man to say that the fact leads to any conclusion about the metaphysical value of Spinoza's doctrine.

Physical dialectic is one thing and metaphysical another. Natural science cannot prove or disprove any proposition about the ultimate nature of things, though it has often proved that supposed ultimate foundations of philosophy were really bad physics; and speculative philosophy can neither prove nor disprove any proposition in the sphere of experimental observation, though philosophers (not being the less so because they might also be masters of exact or applied science) have now and again shown that supposed axioms in the sciences were really logical or metaphysical assumptions out of place. What we may justly infer is that Spinoza succeeded in keeping himself more free than most speculative philosophers from confusion of this kind.

Competence in exact science is in itself no warranty for any such result. Spinoza, certainly was very competent in mathematics, but Descartes and Leibnitz were greater mathematicians. They lived in the triumphs of analytical geometry and the calculus, far excelling anything they could imagine: but their systems of philosophy are historical movements, an exercise for the study of specialists. So, for that matter, is the form of Spinoza's philosophy, yet the spirit and power of Spinoza live for us in such a fashion as the systems of Descartes and Leibnitz do not.

It is easy to say that Spinoza's monism is attractive to students brought up to believe in the uniformity of nature as a practical guide; it is no less easy to say that this attraction may not stand forever against the novel questionings of atomic physics. The real affinity between Spinoza and our masters in the natural sciences lies deeper. Notwithstanding superficial appearances, and according to utterances of his own which are evidently sincere, his chief aim was not to formulate a final system but to make sure of pursuing truth by a right method, to the exclusion alike of tempting conjecture and of foregone conclusions.

We now see, more clearly than Bacon or Descartes or Spinoza could, that no method can be infallible in the hands of fallible men; but we can at least aim at intellectual honesty and the love of truth. How far that love may lead us is too high a question to be dealt with in a few words: I will only note that Spinoza with the last part of the Ethics left out is certainly not the real Spinoza. This brings me to the point I tried to make in addressing the opening meeting of the Spinoza Society's conference at The Hague in September, namely that, for us English speaking people at any rate, the person and character of a teacher count in the long run no less than his intellect or eloquence. As Father Dunin Borkowski, not only a very learned but a most judicious and impartial critic, has well said in his volume *'Spinoza nach drei hundert Jahren'* published on the occasion of this anniversary, Spinoza's doctrine is not only, not even chiefly, a system. It embodies the character of a thinker who sets before himself a noble and disinterested ideal of life, and whom neither any fear of man nor any hope of favor could divert from it. Such are those teachers, whom in many following generations, men, differing widely among themselves in opinions and outlook, will be at one in delighting to honor.

Professor SAMUEL ALEXANDER

Professor of Philosophy,

University of Manchester, England

I rejoice to think that the Spinoza Institute of America is about to unite the philosophers in America in honoring the memory of Spinoza. We cannot show that memory too much honor. Spinoza not only has his great place in the history of philosophy but like others of the major philosophers, like Plato, for instance, his teaching is relevant to our own day and not merely in its own historical setting, for he was not only a philosopher but within the one philosophical scheme he was also both man of science and religious believer, and mystic believer to boot. The same method by which he interprets physical nature using the science of his own day, leads him to interpret human nature dispassionately in the magnificent description of the intellectual love of God as the crown of his inquiry.

One need not be a Spinozist, and subscribe to his doctrine either as a whole or in its details in order to realize the significance of this for our own problems. Physical science is now abandoning its distrust of philosophy and of religious belief and on the contrary is opening arms of welcome to them. The science of the nineteenth century was indifferent or sceptical or at the most found excuses for religion. At the present time some of the greatest representatives of physical science have adopted a remarkable position. They are so much impressed with the artificiality of science, and with the claims of goodness and beauty and religion to recognition of their importance, that they even look to the so-called "values" and to religion to supply the deficiencies of science and its incompetence to give a completely satisfactory view of the world because these things give us direct knowledge of mind and suggest that in mind reality is ultimately to be found.

Now in Spinoza there is neither excuse for religion (that would have been an impossible attitude in his day) nor are goodness and religion needed to assure us of a mind which does not enter directly into the study of physical nature. Mind is as directly present in physical things as in human experience and God, as the totality without which nothing is intelligible, is present from the first, for God is the name of the connectedness of things

which is a simpler fact than any one thing. And if we pursue the method of science far enough, we end inevitably with what is really mystical religion. None of those fatal separations were present in Spinoza into which we have fallen since his time. All the same, Spinoza's fusion of belief and science into one scheme is of vital importance for our guidance. The great problem before us is so to conceive nature and the study of it that beauty and goodness and religion shall be seen to be parts of the same nature of which physical objects are another part. If we are to have a justified religion it must be on a basis which the sciences themselves, supply. How our question is to be solved is another matter. I fancy and hope that philosophers in the next generation will all, like a very few in this generation, whom we others admire and envy, be, not masters of science themselves, for that has ceased to be possible except for a very few, but well-versed in the methods of science.

We may have very different ideas about the merits of Spinoza but can all join in learning from the example of his method.

DR. CONSTANTIN BRUNNER

Dr. Constantin Brunner, contemporary German philosopher and ardent admirer of Spinoza, concludes his letter to the Spinoza Institute as follows:

"I thank you sincerely for your kind request and I wish you a happy success and lasting salutary influence. However, I really do not know what to contribute to the celebration on this particular day since I have been celebrating Spinoza all my life long."

PROF. LEO POLAK

Noted Dutch Spinozist

Groningen, Holland

The tercentennial anniversary of Spinoza's birth has been and is going to be celebrated all the world over "in a manner,

commensurate with the dignity and importance of this great mind".

And if the signs do not deceive, Spinoza in coming ages will be an even more influential spiritual force than he has increasingly shown to be during the last two centuries.

To my mind one can but view this development with joy and satisfaction, since Spinoza has been from the beginning a noble, purifying, rationalising force, and will act as such in the future by virtue of the eternal substance of his mind. Of his mind, not of his system or method which for the most part belong to his own time, I agree with our veteran Spinoza-scholar, Sir Frederick Pollock: "Spinozism, as a living and constructive force, is not a system, but *a habit of mind*.... Wealth in vital ideas is the real test of a philosopher's greatness, and by this test the name of Spinoza stands assured of its rank among the greatest."

Here I think of Kant, his great antipode, of whom something similar may be said. One often hears the slogans: "Either Kant or Spinoza", "Kant *versus* Spinoza", "Spinoza *versus* Kant". That may be true as far as their systems or methods are concerned: transcendentalism or criticism is looked for in vain in Spinoza who had no predecessor like Hume to rouse him from the "dogmatical slumber." If Kant had died at Spinoza's age (44), when he did not yet know Hume, he would now be an insignificant, forgotten dogmatist of the Leibnitz-Wolff-school. Therefore, with regard to the critical habit of mind, Spinoza certainly does not rank below Kant, perhaps quite the contrary! Here we must say, instead of Kant *versus* Spinoza, Kant *and* Spinoza, the essence of their habit of mind being much the same: the conscious autonomy of reason, reason as the ultimate touchstone, the supreme criterion of all truth and value. And here, a synthesis of Spinoza and Kant, a Spinozism, methodically purified and modernized by Kantian criticism, seems to me to be the future of all real and sound philosophy.

The youthful Spinoza in his earliest work, the *Korte Verhandeling,* has proved once for all the logical impossibility of all external "revelation", that is to say, the impossibility of all "heteronomy"; one cannot know whether any word or writing or token claiming divinity or authority is lying or speaking truth, without an internal "immediate" touchstone of good and bad, true and false, without the "natural light" of reason as the ultimate source

of all knowledge about truth and goodness and beauty; as little as one can see with other man's eyes instead of with one's own.

"The Kingdom of Truth and Value is within ourselves"—Reason as our "highest gift" and "the sun in the realm of wisdom", that is the eternal foundation on which his *Tractatus Theologico-Politicus* and his *Ethics* are built, the fundamental truth by which Spinoza vanquished all church-creed and church-dogmatism, by which he delivered and will deliver mankind from secular mythology, from thraldom, iconology and idol-worship. So for the *"superstitio"* of commands and obedience he substituted the *"ratio"* of charity and justice, for the letter that killeth the spirit that giveth life.

Spinoza's habit of mind is the elevation from the self-centered, subjective and individual to the central, objective and universal by pure reasonableness of Will and Thought, the free preference of the Highest and Best, the serene serving of the eternal Values for their own sake, for their intrinsic worth; *bene agere et laetari.*

That was Spinoza's "intuition of God", his *"amor intellectualis Dei",* that is: his rational enthusiasm for what alone is sacred and holy, his seeing things *"sub specie aeternitatis",* his living *"sub ductu rationis."* Under the guidance of Reason, says Spinoza, we shall be righteous, fair and honest, nay we shall be like one body and one soul, striving with one rational common sense and one rational common will to one rational common weal. - For the fundamental antithesis in Spinozism is this: *Partiality* is the essence of all delusion and meanness, the part taking itself for the whole (*imaginatio* and *cupiditas*)—*Universality* is the essence of all truth and virtue, being the right relation of thought and will towards the eternal Whole (*ratio* and *amor*).

Baruch Spinoza, blessed Spinoza, the man who in all simpleness has lived and died, suffered and smiled, fought and taught in this light of Eternity.

May this habit of mind, this spirit of Spinoza and of Spinozism, be with you and your great Institute, and may it more and more pervade mankind!

PROF. CARL GEBHARDT

Noted German Spinozist and Secretary for Germany of the Societas Spinozana

If we wish to celebrate Spinoza in the right spirit, we should not think of him as a great figure of the past, but rather as a living force of the present. Our contemplation should not be a meditation upon death, but a meditation upon life.

We find ourselves now in the midst of a cultural and social crisis, and the range of certain and of permanent realities becomes with every year ever smaller and smaller. In our age Spinoza can be a guide as no other man because his philosophy is not a mere abstraction of ideas, but a living experience.

Spinoza—the son of a people eradicated from its soil and divorced from the national practice of its religion—had to create for himself and by himself the reality of his God-belief and the reality of his State. What Spinoza has thus accomplished for himself has become an ideal to every man for whom time and destiny have set the task of creating a reality for himself by the power of his own strength.

The philosophy of Spinoza is an all comprehensive philosophy sufficient for life and encompassing death.

By proclaiming the unity of God and the World, Spinoza has interpreted the world more profoundly than any one before him.

In these four significant equations the meaning of Spinozism is contained:

God is Nature. Just as the deterministic reality of God permeates the world—so there ought to be no antithesis between science which interprets the world, and religion which unites man with God.

God is Truth. Both aspects of reality: corporeality and spirituality are one. Spinoza teaches a realism which transcends both idealism and materialism.

God is Virtue. Just as the Godhead is itself active essence so the value of personality lies in action. Spinoza has avoided the contradiction which separates ethics from human nature, and he has assigned to us the task of liberating the divine nature in us through the mastery of our passions.

God is Love. In the living feeling of unity of man and nature, and of man and God, Being affirms itself.

Spinoza has not only taught his philosophy, he has also lived it. Again and again he demanded that we must form the idea of a perfect life in order to strive after the perfection of our own being. Thus Spinoza has become a prototype to us, leader of the perplexed, *exemplar vitae.*

The *Societas Spinozana* has set itself the task of furthering the knowledge of the teachings of Spinoza in order to bring out the living values of his philosophy. The Spinoza Institute of America just as the *Societas Spinozana,* is working with earnest devotion at the task of fostering in our age the knowledge of the philosophy of Spinoza. On this anniversary of Spinoza I convey to you the greetings and the felicitations of the *Societas Spinozana.*

PROF. LEON BRUNSCHVICG

Professor of Philosophy, University of Paris

Membre de l'Institute de France

The invitation which the Spinoza Institute of America is kind enough to offer me is of the sort which one experiences the most pleasure in receiving. It is particularly comforting to think that on this day of commemoration those minds most concerned with the future of humanity should gather and ask one another what light they may draw from the work of Spinoza. I am deeply touched at your graciousness in associating me with your effort.

It is not long that Spinoza has been studied for himself, after having been in the hands of the "Naturalists" or of the "Romanticists," little other than a weapon against common sense beliefs. We know today that the key to the understanding of Spinoza lies in the coming of reason as it suddenly revealed itself in the seventeenth century on the ruins of formal and deductive logic, through the double discovery of analytic geometry and mathematical physics. But Descartes had not succeeded in formulating a homogeneous epistomology: his geometry is an algebra which breaks avowedly with the Euclidean method of demonstration; his physics, on the contrary, is subject to a still imaginative concept

of extension. Spinoza, however, is not content with rejecting the presumptions of the Aristotelian concepts and of the transcendental entities, relegating them to the lower plane of knowledge of the first kind. He supplies the key to the Cartesian enigma through the fact that he distinguishes the two degrees of rational knowledge: reasoning in the manner of Euclid, on which is based the mechanistic point of view, and intuition, which draws from space its aspect of externality to resolve it in the indivisible unity of the attribute extension. Parallel to this is the internal nature of thought, equally one and indivisible in its quality of attribute.

This struggle of mathematical analysis against geometry, without which the distinction between the second and third kinds of knowledge would have neither basis nor significance, dominates the history, not only of science, but of metaphysics. Thanks to it we understand at last how the rejection of the supernatural and of the transcendant, the abandonment of final causes and of mysticism, in short, the mast scrupulous and the most rigorous fidelity to the classical principle of reason far from compromising, as one ordinarily imagines, the religious values, were on the contrary the very condition for the progress of the spiritual life.

This is the point which we must emphasize at this time. We can dominate and surmount the difficulties in which the prodigious discoveries of contemporary physics seem to have thrown the scientists only by dominating and surpasssing the common interpretations of Spinozism. These interpretations fall into the grave error of halting at the knowledge of the second class, discursive reasoning; they are unable to perceive the thoroughly rational character of knowledge of the third class, of intellectual intuition. On the other hand, when one has gone to the end of the Ethics and has grasped the secret of the work, one realizes that the failure of the mechanistic concept is the victory of mathematical analysis, and that on this victory depend the greatest interests of mankind.

A physics, limited by a mechanistic concept, a system of nature closed upon itself, could only lead to a *metaphysics of slavery* in accordance with the title of the *Fourth part* of the *Ethics;* only analysis allows one to oppose to it the *philosophy of freedom,* which will give in the *Fifth part* the conclusion of the Spinozistic doctrine. This salutary opposition between a mathematical physics of a geometrical model and a mathematical physics of an analyt-

ical basis, to the great surprise and confusion of a dogmatic and superficial positivism, has brought to light, in our generation, the marvelous development of the Einstein theories of relativity as well as the wave mechanics of M. Louis de Broglie.

The limitations imposed by the subjection to the imagination, characteristic of Euclidian space, and by the submission to the realistic concept of the atom, are transcended; and henceforth permit the pure activity of the intellect alone to function in the constitution of a truly concrete universe.

Spinoza, in the last lines of the *Ethics,* has insisted on the extreme effort needed to clear up the confusion in which scientists and metaphysicians struggled in his day as they struggle in ours. But he had also shown what the reward for such an effort would be, definitely tearing humanity away from the state of childhood and from the rules of scholasticism, which was prolonged well into the 17th Century by the combined prejudices of logicians and theologians. The spiritually integrated life, in the light and purity which testify to its complete fruition, is only accessible to the intellect.

A doctrine of spiritual immanence alone, then, has the strength to pass beyond the disturbed and confused region where hope is inseparable from fear, where faith is at grips with doubt, where the surge of mystic ecstasy is followed by barrenness and anguish; such doctrine attains to the infinitely infinite God, absolutely one in identity, whence the sage reaches consciousness of himself, of things and of God.

A strictly rational religion for which the *Word* is the *Word* in its eternal essence, in its inexhaustible fecundity, the *Word and nothing else,* satisfies the demands of absolute universality, of "catholicity" without restriction and without ulterior motive, which, since Heraclitus and Xenophon are those of western humanity.

Spinoza, in the *Tractatus Theologico-Politicus,* has indicated its accord with the message of Christ interpreted directly in the light of the Gospels. The prophecies and miracles of the Old Testament, which are the products of a naive imagination; the commandments of the law and the ceremonies of worship, which deflect the course of passions and contribute to their appeasement, must be considered as artifices relatively inevitable in the state of an archaic or puerile mentality. As such they are beneficial

for their political utility and, in so far as they anticipate higher degrees of conscience and of action. But it would be ruinous to draw therefrom dogmatic and closed systems which, in the name of an exterior authority, would cut short the progress of which they promised to be the instrument.

Spinoza, excommunicated by the synagogue, found in the free groups of the Collegiants the comfort of a fraternal welcome; he willingly chatted with his hostess concerning the humble sermon of a pastor. This did not prevent him from opposing the most biting irony in answer to the presumptuous challenge addressed to him by Albert Burgh, neophyte of the Roman Church. Isn't the principle of this twofold attitude the one which we ought to observe in meeting the intellectual and moral trials which are imposed on the world of today?

As the progress of the science of religion became more assured and impartial, it established, partially in the field of ethnography and prehistory, partly in the comparative study of myths, dogma and cults, the principle of psychology and sociology which the genius of Spinoza had succeeded in appropriating from his familiarity with Jewish antiquity.

To give back to history what is born of history, is to permit us to conquer on the plane of reason and the eternal, the mind and truth of God, definitely emancipated from the letter of the law and from the conformity of tradition. In other words, the line of separation between the Old Testament and the New Testament is indeed that which Spinoza recognized between history and the Eternal, between the letter and the spirit, between the implicitness (*clair obscur*) of a particular faith and the explicitness of universal reason. Hence, results this significant consequence (and I need not say to what extent it has been understood and proclaimed by your Emerson), that perfect Christianity consists of a pure spirituality such as Spinoza teaches to those who meditate upon his works.

As profoundly and as objectively as the distinction found in the geometrically mechanistic concept, which supports the structure of the Ethics, is confirmed by the development of the sciences of nature, so in like manner the development of the humanities show, as far as the evidence permit, the bond which unites the exegetic criticism of the *Tractatus Theologico-Politicus* to the religious doctrines of the *Ethics*. It is the Ethics that shows us that

from within ourselves and in this life there is the assurance for us of participating in the beatitude of divine glory through the fundamental perception of knowledge (intellectual intuition) and through intellectual love.

Notwithstanding the hatreds of peoples and rivalries of creeds, class struggles and racial prejudices—which threaten the stability of civilization throughout the world—there remains the need of striving to convince our contemporaries that it is entirely futile to invoke Christ in one's favor if one has failed to accept the happy and manly resolution *to let the dead bury its dead.*

Equally futile would spiritual appeals be if one passes again to the side of the Old Testament, falling back anew under the literal authority of the law and under the yoke of a confessional group.

One must cross in the practical order of existence the passionate frontier of clans and sects in the same fashion as he must pierce through the arbitrary limits of dogmas and systems: *Determinatio negatio est.*

THE JEWISH QUESTION AND SPINOZA'S PHILOSOPHY

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Far from the top of rocks I see him, and from hills I behold him: lo, it is a people that shall dwell alone, and among the nations shall not be reckoned.—Numbers XXIII:9.

When the Supreme Being allotted to the nations their inheritances, when He differentiated the human race; then He fixed the boundaries of the peoples according to the number of Israel.—Deuteronomy XXXII:8.

Opfert mit mir ehrerbietig den Mannen des heiligen verstossenen Spinoza! Ihn durchdrang der hohe Weltgeist; das Unendliche war sein Anfang und sein Ende, das Universum seine einzige und ewige Liebe; in heiliger Unschuld und tiefer Demuth spiegelte er sich in der ewigen Welt; voller Religion war er und voll heiligen Geistes; und darum steht er auch da allein und unerreicht, Meister in seiner Kunst, aber erhaben über die profane Zünft, ohne Junger und ohne Bürgerrecht!—Schleiermacher.

Among philosophers Spinoza is unique and stands alone, as among the nations the Jewish people are unique and stand alone. Both embraced and comprehended the All, both served the whole human race, both started with the Absolute, Eternal and Infinite and aimed to identify themselves with the Absolute, Eternal and Infinite, both perceived the destiny of mankind and the road leading to salvation and happiness, and both endeavored to persuade mankind to follow that road to their salvation and happiness, and for this both were excommunicated and made to suffer. Spinoza and the Jewish people are one in essence and in fate. The Jewish question is the question of Spinoza's philosophy, and both are the questions of Judaism. Judaism is the question of the whole human race, and it involves all other questions of human existence. All questions of the human race will be solved only with the realization of Judaism.

Since 1914 great historic events have taken place. There was the World War, the Russian Revolution and the upheavals in Europe and elsewhere. These historic events brought to mankind disillusionment and bitter disappointment. The World War, which was expected to end all wars, only prepared the ground for still more frightful wars; the Russian Revolution, which was expected to bring to the working masses freedom, emancipation from exploitation and communism, only brought them an oppressive dictatorship, a more intense exploitation and state capitalism; and the upheavals in Europe and elsewhere, which were conceived in democracy, socialism and internationalism, only brought fascism, Hitlerism and an insane nationalism. And, whatever these events brought to other nations, to the Jews they brought only greater misery, suffering and despair. Anti-Semitism, which before 1914 found open outbursts among backward nations and in semi-civilized countries, since then has become the social philosophy and economico-political policy of the most cultured people in the most civilized countries. Modern Balaams came to the fore and, in the name of religion, philosophy, science, art and history, endeavored to prove that the Jews and Judaism are inherently wicked and evil and a deadly menace to the Western nations, their culture and civilization; and that, to save the Western nations, their culture and civilization from decline and extinction, it is necessary to exterminate the Jews and Judaism. Hence the slogan: Death to the Jews and Judaism! But this is only a beginning. When we consider the present universal depression: that millions of workers can find no employment and, in the midst of plenty, are reduced to privation and starvation; that millions of dollars' worth of means of production lie idle, because there is no effective demand for commodities; that billions of dollars are hoarded and kept out of circulation, because there is no room for their safe and profitable investment; when we reflect on the prevailing social unrest, the rising and spreading tide of crime, the growing indifference to intellectual and spiritual values, the loss of faith in Western culture and civilization, and the disintegration of family, social and moral ties; when we contemplate the forebodings in the consciousness of mankind of impending dangers, wars and catastrophes; that, just as the cartilaginous cells, sensing danger, build walls around themselves, shutting themselves out from the stream of life and die, so the

Western nations, sensing danger, built around themselves tariff and anti-immigration walls, shutting themselves out from the stream of life and condemning themselves to decline and death; when we comprehend the historic significance of these events and facts, we then clearly perceive that a dark night of reaction, wars and revolution is coming upon us.

Since the Jews appeared on the historic stage, they were the first to struggle, and were always the first in the struggle for light, knowledge, humanity, peace and progress. And because of this, the Jews were always the first to suffer, and always suffered most, when reaction set in and darkness prevailed over light, ignorance over knowledge, inhumanity over humanity, war over peace and regress over progress. As in the past, so also in the near future, the Jews will be the first to suffer, and they will suffer most from the oncoming dark night of reaction, wars and revolutions. The Jews had a long history; but, with the exception of a few brief intervals, it was a history of misery and suffering. In the past the Jews passed through many severe ordeals; but in the past the Jews were sustained and preserved by their strong belief in God and their abiding faith in his promise. God promised them:

"And yet for all that, when they are in the land of their enemies, I will not reject them, neither will I abhor them, to destroy them utterly, and to break my covenant with them; for I am Jehovah their God."—*Leviticus* XXVI:44.

But now the Jews are no longer strong in their belief in God, they have no faith in His promise and they do not hope for a Messiah to come to redeem them from misery and suffering and to bring them peace and happiness. When in the near future the Jews will again be overtaken by a severe ordeal, what will sustain them, what will preserve them, and what will save them from extinction? The Jews face again the eternal question: To be or not to be? It behooves the Jews to pause and reflect on this question, to face it courageously and to consider it soberly and adequately.

Reason, as well as life, dictates that self-preservation is the highest virtue. In endeavoring to preserve themselves, the Jews are exercising the highest virtue. But we must be clear about the virtue of self-preservation. All realities of existence, by virtue of the divine power in them, endeavor to preserve themselves in their being; but their self-preservation goes no further than mere ex-

istence: they have no aim to realize and no duty to perform. But far different is the case of man: man has an aim to realize and a duty to perform. Man, as the Bible tells us, "is born a wild ass's colt"; but man is predestined to attain to a state of reason, to become a rational human being, and to live a rational and happy life; and this predestined goal devolves upon man the duty to endeavor to attain to reason and to become a rational human being. Hence, self-preservation in man is only then a virtue, when he endeavors to become a rational human being; but self-preservation for the sake of mere existence is not a virtue in man. What is true of man generally is in a higher degree also true of the exceptionally endowed. *Noblesse oblige*: nobility of endowment devolves nobility of duty. It is not enough for men, like Moses and Spinoza, to strive to attain to reason and become rational human beings: this they were by divine grace; but these men must go further; they must endeavor to spread among others the light and knowledge revealed to them from above; so that others, who are unable to attain to light and knowledge by their own efforts, may attain to them by the aid of these exceptional men. Hence, in the case of men, like Moses and Spinoza, self-preservation is a virtue only then when they perform the duty inherent in their noble nature. What is true of exceptional men is equally true of exceptional nations and peoples. A people exceptionally endowed has the exceptional duty to help other nations and people to attain to light and knowledge, so that all may rise and attain to the predestined goal of mankind.

Existence is an infinite pyramid: broad and massive at the base and tapering to a point at the apex. At the base is the infinite inorganic world, on the top of the inorganic world is the world of living beings, and the top of the living world is the human race; all together constitute the infinite pyramid of existence. What the pyramid loses in mass as it rises towards the apex it gains in quality, and so the balance and unity of existence are maintained. From this follows that the nearer a being is towards the apex the more excellent it is. The human race, being part of the infinite pyramid of existence, is itself an epitome of this pyramid: it is broad and massive at the base and tapering to a point at the apex. At the base of the human pyramid is the mass of mankind, and at the apex is the *Zaddik,* the holy excellent man. Here, again, what the human pyramid loses in mass

as it rises towards the apex it gains in excellence; so that the nearer to the apex a man is the more excellent he is. The Rabbis say: *"the whole world was created only for the sake of the zaddik"*. This is a profound truth. All progress is from the apex to the base of the infinite pyramid of existence. The *zaddik* is at the apex of the pyramid; he is the first to receive the divine light and knowledge from above; he passes them on to those below him, and from them the light and knowledge pass to the base of the pyramid. Thus the whole existence is raised ever nearer to God. God created the world that it should become perfected and become re-identified with Him. But this purpose God can realize only through the *zaddik*. Hence, the whole world was created only for the sake of the *zaddik;* without the *zaddik* God's purpose could not be realized. But existence is based upon the principle: *quid pro quo*: nothing is given for nothing. The *zaddik* is exceptionally endowed and he is placed on the top of the pyramid, not for his own benefit, but for the benefit of the whole existence. From this follows that, just as the world was created for the sake of *the zaddik,* so in turn, the *zaddik* was created for the sake of the world. And the *zaddik* only then justifies his position and performs his duty, to receive the divine light and knowledge from above and to pass them on to those below. Self-preservation in the *zaddik* implies the performance of the highest duty.

In the human pyramid the Jewish people occupy the highest position; the Jewish people are the *zaddik* of the human race. The whole world was created for the sake of the Jewish people; but, in turn, the Jewish people exist for the sake of the whole world. Self-preservation in the Jewish people is only then a virtue when they endeavor to be worthy of their exalted position and pass on the light and knowledge revealed to them to the other nations and races. The Jews were conceived in an ideal, they embody this ideal, and they exist for the sake of this ideal; and this ideal is Judaism. Judaism has a religious and an historic aspect. It is a religion in so far as it concerns itself about the relation of the individual to God, and prescribes a modus vivendi et operandi through which the individual can identify himself with God and attain to salvation and happiness. Judaism is a historic function in so far as it devolves upon the individual the duty to help the rest of the human race to attain to that salvation and happiness. God created the world, brought out the human race, and chose

the Jews to be a holy, model and superior people, not solely for the benefit of the Jewish people, but for the benefit of the whole human race. So long as the Jews were yet young and immature, so long the religious aspect of Judaism was its most important aspect. It was then that the Jews received their training and preparation for the historic aspect. But when the Jews attained to maturity, then the historic function of Judaism became its most important aspect. Now the time had arrived for the Jews to leave their home and go to the nations and races to bring them divine light and knowledge. This was in accordance with the purpose of God.

As soon as the Jewish people, in the person of Abraham, was conceived, Jehovah entered with them into an eternal covenant, promising to make of Abraham and his children a blessing to all the nations and peoples. Later, when the Jews came out of Egypt, Jehovah renewed and ratified that eternal covenant, and Jehovah promised that He will never break that covenant. Later on, through the Prophet Jeremiah, Jehovah promised to enter with the Jews into a new covenant: "Behold, days are coming, saith Jehovah when I will make with the house of Israel, and with the house of Judah, a new covenant;

"Not like the covenant that I made with their fathers on the day that I took hold of them by the hand to bring them out of the land of Egypt . . . . .

"But this is the covenant that I will make with the house of Israel, after those days saith Jehovah, I will place My law in their inward parts and upon their heart will I write it; and I will be unto them for a God, and they shall be unto me for a people.

And they shall not teach any more every man his neighbor, and every man his brother, saying: Know Jehovah, for they all shall know Me, from the least of them to the greatest of them, saith Jehovah, for I will forgive their iniquity and I will remember their sin no more."—*Jeremiah* XXXI 30—33.

The new covenant will differ from the old covenant. Whereas the old covenant was given to them when they were yet young and immature, and when they stood in need of prophets to guide them and teachers to instruct them in the ways of Jehovah; but when they will become mature, each of them will know directly and intimately Jehovah, for He will write His laws into the

heart and soul of every one, from the humblest to the most exalted. When the Jews themselves will attain to this direct and intimate knowledge of Jehovah, they will then help the other nations and people to attain to this direct and intimate knowledge of Jehovah. All mankind will then turn to Jehovah for light, knowledge and guidance. The whole world will be filled with the knowledge of Jehovah as the sea is filled with water. No one will then hurt another, and all mankind will then live in peace and in happiness.—"And it shall come to pass in the last days, that the mountain of the house of Jehovah shall be established on the top of the mountains, and shall be exalted above the hills; and all the nations shall flow unto it. And many people shall go and say: Come ye, and let us go up to the mountain of Jehovah, to the house of the God of Jacob; that He may teach us of His ways, and we may walk in His paths; for out of Zion shall go forth the law, and the word of Jehovah out of Jerusalem. And He will judge between the nations, and decide for many people; and they shall beat their swords into plough-shares, and their spears into pruning-knives; nation shall not lift sword against nation, neither shall they learn war any more."—*Isaiah* II. 2-4.

They shall not do hurt nor destroy on all My holy mountain; for the earth shall be full of the knowledge of Jehovah, as the waters cover the sea.—*Isaiah* XI, 9.

The Jewish people are most unique. The Jewish people are the only people who from the very beginning of their existence conceived the idea of Jehovah and perceived that it was their historic duty to bring the knowledge of Jehovah to the rest of mankind. All hopes of the Jews are bound up with Jehovah and with the whole human race. Three times a day the Jews end their prayers with the expression of hope that in the near future Jehovah will reveal Himself to all of mankind, and all of mankind will acknowledge His kingdom; and that then Jehovah will be one and His name will be one. Mankind will no longer be divided as to who is Jehovah and what He requires of mankind; but all will unite together in Jehovah.

"Therefore we hope in thee, Jehovah our God, that we may speedily behold the glory of thy might, when thou wilt remove the abominations from the earth, and the idols shall be utterly cut off; when the world shall be redeemed under the kingdom of the Almighty, and all the children of flesh shall call upon thy

Name. . . . All the inhabitants of the world shall know and acknowledge that unto thee every knee must bend, every tongue must swear . . . . they shall all accept the yoke of thy kingdom, and over them thou wilt speedily reign for ever and ever . . . . in that day shall Jehovah be One and his Name One. . . . It behooveth us to praise the Lord of All."

Jehovah made with the Jews an eternal covenant, and this is an absolute assurance to the Jews that, come what may, they will not be destroyed. As in the past, so also in the future the Jews will survive their enemies, until all of mankind will turn to Jehovah, and then all misery and suffering of the Jews will come to an end. How did the Jews come to this perception and conviction? Who is Jehovah? Why do the Jews pray to Jehovah and rest all their hopes on Jehovah? To understand this, we must consider Spinoza's philosophy. Spinoza's philosophy is nothing else than Judaism made explicit. By understanding Spinoza's philosophy we shall understand the eternal and infinite idea that is the essence of Judaism.

Spinoza begins with the Absolute. The Absolute is in Himself: He has no relation to anything outside of himself; his essence involves existence. The Absolute exists by perpetually causing himself to exist. The Absolute is substance; his essence is from himself. The Absolute is life: he is eternally living. The Absolute is thought, he is conscious of himself and thinks of himself. The Absolute in nature is prior to the world.

As thought, the Absolute reflects on himself; this reflection constitutes his infinite intellect. The infinite intellect perceives the Absolute in infinite aspects. These infinite aspects are his infinite attributes. Each attribute expresses the eternal and infinite essence of the Absolute. Like the Absolute, the attributes are in themselves, and bear no relation to anything outside of the Absolute. All attributes are coeternal and coinfinite. One attribute can neither create nor determine another attribute. The infinite intellect contemplates the attributes in infinitely different combinations. These different combinations of the attributes in the contemplation of the infinite intellect constitute the infinite modes. The modes derive their essence from the attributes, but their existence from the infinite intellect. When the infinite intellect contemplates two or more attributes together, a mode comes into existence; when the infinite intellect ceases to contemplate

the attributes together, the mode ceases to be. Absolute thought reflects itself in the infinite intellect, the infinite intellect reflects itself in an infinite series of reflexions, and all reflexions involve the infinite attributes of the Absolute. The further a reflexion is from the Absolute the less perfect and the more corporeal it is. Matter is the furthest reflexion, and therefore it is the least perfect and the most corporeal. The modes constitute the realities of existence. Thus the world comes into existence.

The world has neither essence nor existence of its own. The world is merely the reflexion of the reflexion of the Absolute in an infinite series of reflexions. The Absolute, because he is the cause of himself, eternally reflects on himself through an infinite series of reflexions, and this eternal reflexion on himself constitutes the world. The Absolute therefore eternally renews the process of creation. Should the Absolute cease to reflect on himself, and the whole world would cease to be. The Absolute in nature is prior to the world, but as cause of all effects he is coeternal and coinfinite with the world. Since the Absolute is eternal and eternally reflects on himself, the world existed eternally, and with relation to eternity there can be no time. Every moment the Absolute repeats the process of eternal and infinite creation. God comprehends both the Absolute and the Creator; as Absolute He is unknowable, but as Creator, He is known through his creations. The realities of existence, being modes, derive their essence from the attributes, that is, from the Absolute; but their existence and nature they derive from the infinite intellect of God. The contemplation by the infinite intellect of several attributes together gives that combination a form, and form constitutes the nature of the realities. Form determines function, and the laws that govern the nature and behavior of the realities are inherent in the forms of the realities. God as Absolute and as Creator determines the essence, existence and nature of all realities of existence: without God nothing can be or be conceived.

Our intellect perceives only two of the infinite attributes of the Absolute: namely, thought and extension. Thought is in itself, extension is thought reflecting itself outwardly. Absolute thought reflects itself outwardly in the infinite intellect, and the infinite intellect reflects itself outwardly through an infinite series of reflexions, and thus absolute thought becomes infinite extension. As it is the eternal nature of absolute thought to reflect itself out-

wardly, it follows that extension is an eternal and infinite attribute of the Absolute. To our intellect all realities of existence appear to be modes of thought and extension. What is eternal and infinite is eternal and infinite in every part thereof; for the eternal and infinite cannot be composed of temporary and finite parts. Hence, in essence all realities are eternal and infinite, but in their existence they are temporary and finite. The difference between a reality and the Absolute is this. The Absolute is infinitely explicit: he manifests himself in infinite extension and infinite realities; but a reality is infinitely implicit: it contains the eternal and infinite nature of the Absolute only implicitly. A seed, though very small, contains implicitly eternity and infinitude. If all else in existence be destroyed and only this seed be left, this seed by virtue of eternity and the infinite implicitness in it would extend infinitely and become infinite existence. Because all realities of existence are modes of thought and extension, it follows that the order and connexion of the realities in the aspect of thought is the same as the order and connexion of the realities in the aspect of extension.

Man is a mode of thought and of extension; the mode of thought constitutes his mind, and the mode of extension constitutes his body. The mind and the body are only two aspects of the same reality. The reality of man, which constitutes his essence, is an idea of God. This idea is conceived by the infinite intellect of God and is part of the infinite intellect. This idea is the soul of man, it constitutes his personality, and attains to the form of the intellect. This idea comprehends thought and extension and brings out the mind and the body of man. In bringing out the mind and the body this idea differentiates itself into two principal faculties: a faculty for perception, and a faculty for understanding. The first faculty functions through the body and gives rise to sense-perception and intuition; the other faculty functions through the mind and gives rise to the understanding and reason. At first the sense-perceptions and the understanding manifest themselves, and their cooperation constitutes the imagination. Later, intuition and reason manifest themselves, and their cooperation constitutes the intellect. In the intellect the soul of man reunites and becomes one again. Thus the idea emanating from the infinite intellect of God goes through a process of dialectics. At first it is absolute one, then it differentiates itself, and finally becomes one

again. The intellect is the highest state of man, and is his predetermined goal. When the idea, part of the infinite intellect of God, and which is the soul of man, attains to the form of the intellect, then man perceives the infinite intellect of God.

The body enters into relations and interactions with the external bodies. These relations and interactions affect the body and the external bodies. The mind perceives the affections of the body, and through the affections it becomes conscious of its own body and also of the external bodies. The mind then imagines the nature and form of its own body and of the external bodies. This constitutes imagination. Through the imagination the mind cannot acquire an adequate and certain knowledge of its own body and of the external bodies. Only when man attains to the intellect, only then does he attain to self-consciousness and an adequate and certain knowledge of the external realities of existence. The consciousness of the mind of the affections of its own body constitutes the effects of the mind. The mind is thus affected through the affections of the body.

All affects of the mind are only a combination of three primary affects: desire, joy and sorrow. Desire is the manifestation of the essence of man, which is the endeavor to persevere in his being. Joy is a manifestation of the passing of man from a lesser to a greater perfection; sorrow is a manifestation of the passing of man from a greater to a lesser perfection. Perfection is reality; the more perfection a man has the more reality he possesses, and the more he is active. The consciousness of increasing perfection in man constitutes joy, and the consciousness of decreasing perfection in man constitutes sorrow. When a man passes to a greater perfection, the power of the body to act and of the mind to think increases; and when a man passes to a lesser perfection, the power of the body to act and of the mind to think diminish; in the former state he feels joy, in the latter state he feels sorrow.

Man goes through an evolution. He begins as a plant, then becomes an animal, and finally becomes a rational human being. As a plant, his supreme function is to preserve himself and to propagate himself. The stomach and the sex organs are the principal instruments of man as a plant. As an animal, his supreme function is to move about the world, to discover, create and to conquer. The hands, feet, eyes, the senses and the understanding are the principal instruments of man as an animal. As a rational

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human being, his supreme function is to know and understand himself, existence and God. The principal instruments for this function are intuition and reason. Man thus remains a trinity of plant, animal and man, but in his evolution their roles change in importance. At first the plant function is predominant, next the animal function predominates, and finally his human function becomes supreme. This reflects itself in the relative powers of the mind and the body. During the plant stage, the mind and the body are in perfect equilibrium. During this stage the mind cannot determine the body to act, and the body cannot determine the mind to think. Man is then like a plant; his mind and body are equally affected by external things and causes. During the animal stage, the mind gains some power over the body. The mind can imagine, independently of the body, that which shall increase the power of the body to act and of the mind to think. By this man partially emancipates himself from the absolute sway of external things and causes. Finally, during the human stage and by means of his intellect man transcends the external things and causes. Man then becomes like God; he then lives and acts according to his true nature. Between man and God there is only this difference: whereas God exists and acts from the necessity of His own nature, man then acts and lives from the necessity of the nature given him by God. When man attains to the intellect, he perceives that God is the direct, immanent, eternal and infinite cause of all effects, and that only God determines the nature, existence, action and effect of all realities of existence. And by identifying himself with God man thus transcends all external realities.

Man is active and feels joy, when he is the adequate cause of what takes place in him or outside of him; and man is passive and feels sorrow, when he is not the adequate cause of what takes place in him or outside of him. Until man has attained to the intellect and has perceived that God is the direct, immanent, eternal and infinite cause of all effects, man believes that he is determined in his actions by external bodies and causes. He is then under the sway of the external world, subject to them, and is in a stage of bondage. But when man attains to the intellect and identifies himself with God, he completely emancipates himself from the sway of external things and causes and becomes free. The stage of bondage causes him to feel sorrow and suffering;

the stage of freedom causes him to feel joy and happiness. Freedom, joy and happiness man can attain only through his intellect.

Love is joy accompanied with the idea of an external cause. We love the thing that is the cause of our joy. When through the intellect we perceive that God is the only cause of all effects and the substance of all realities, we then acknowledge no other cause. God has an adequate and infinite knowledge of himself, and this gives him infinite joy. When we attain to the intellect and we perceive that our intellect is part of the infinite intellect of God, we partake of the infinite and adequate knowledge which God has of Himself and of His infinite joy. We then perceive that God is the cause of our joy. Since love is joy accompanied with the idea of its cause, we love God as the cause of our joy. This constitutes the intellectual love of God. Only by means of the intellect can we attain to this love of God, and only this love can give supreme, continuous and eternal happiness, bliss. In God this happiness is supreme, continuous and eternal. When we attain to the intellect, and through the intellect to the intellectual love of God, then we partake of the supreme, continuous and eternal happiness of God.

Our soul is an idea of God and this idea is part of the infinite and eternal intellect of God. What is eternal and infinite is eternal and infinite in every part thereof. This idea of God, which constitutes our soul, is, therefore, eternal and infinite. The sojourn of the soul in an embodied state may be temporary and finite, but its essence is eternal and infinite. And so, when the time for man comes to die, then the idea of God, which is the soul of man, separates itself from the body and the mind; the mind and the body merge into the attributes, thought and extension; and the soul merges into the infinite intellect of God and rejoices with God. This constitutes the immortality of the soul. When by means of the intellect we perceive the infinite intellect of God, that God is the cause of all effects and the substance of all realities, that God determines the existence, nature and functions of all realities of existence, that through all existence God realizes an eternal and infinite purpose, and that we are destined to attain to the intellectual love of God and the enjoyment of supreme, continuous and eternal happiness; then all existence becomes purged of all evil, misery and suffering, and becomes rational and purposeful. We then rejoice in uniting

with God. This union gives us supreme bliss and the highest acquiescence of the soul.

Thus Spinoza reveals to us the nature of God, the order and purpose of existence and the destiny of man. What Spinoza revealed explicitly is the essence and soul of Judaism. The essence and soul of Judaism is the intellectual love of God. God manifests himself through infinite attributes, but man is concerned only about the infinite intellect of God, for his soul is part of the infinite intellect of God and is destined to merge into the infinite intellect of God. The salvation of man is bound up principally with the infinite of God, and man is destined to attain through his intellect to the intellectual love of God. The infinite intellect of God is Jehovah. This is the reason why the Jews are principally concerned about Jehovah. The soul and essence of Judaism is contained in the *Shema*:

"Hear Israel: Jehovah our God, Jehovah is One;" and "thou shalt love Jehovah thy God with all thy heart, with all thy soul and with all thy strength." This means that the infinite intellect of God and our intellect are one, and therefore we are to love Jehovah our God with all our heart, soul and strength. And thus we see that Spinoza's philosophy is only Judaism made explicit. And, just as Spinoza carried us through a long and laborious process of reasoning to bring us to the perception of the infinite intellect of God and the intellectual love of God; so Judaism by all its laws, commandments and practices leads us to the perception of Jehovah and the love of Jehovah.

One that has seen the light can no longer be content to dwell in darkness. One that has perceived the infinite intellect of God can no longer live in superstition. And, just as one that has the light is anxious to reveal the light to others, that others shall also enjoy it; so, one that has attained to the perception of the infinite intellect of God is anxious to reveal it to all men, so that all men may see the light and live in happiness. And when we perceive the order and purpose of existence and the destiny of mankind, that all men are destined to attain to the intellectual love of God, then we can no longer doubt, but are firmly convinced that God will realize His purpose. The intellect, when it reveals itself in us, becomes the light and guide to the whole man. The Jewish people are the intellect of the human race. The Jewish people were first called to the apex of the pyramid of existence, that they

might help the rest of the human race to attain to the intellectual love of God. When an organ is brought out and perfected, then no other organ can take its place and perform its function. The Jewish people were called into existence to perform a definite historic function, and in the course of four thousand years they were perfected in that function. No other nation or people can take the place of the Jews and perform their function. Salvation, as Jesus said, is of the Jews: from no other nation or people will salvation come. Since Jehovah brought out the Jews to realize his purpose, and for four thousand years perfected them in the performance of their historic function, this constitutes the eternal covenant between Jehovah and the Jews. Jehovah will not change, and so this covenant will not change. With absolute truth and certainty the Jews say:

"Jehovah gave us a true doctrine, and therewith implanted in us an eternal life." The Jews are eternal, for the covenant is eternal and Jehovah is eternal.

"When the Supreme Being allotted to the nations their inheritances, when He differentiated the human race; then He fixed the boundaries of the peoples, according to the number of Israel." To all other nations and peoples the Supreme Being gave fixed boundaries: fixed in time, in space and in historic function; but to the Jews He gave only numbers. All other nations and peoples are the organs of the human body; each organ is limited in nature and function, and so are the nations and other peoples. But the Jews are the intellect of mankind. And, just as the infinite is infinite in scope and eternal, so also the Jews are infinite in their historic function and eternal. Number is the essence of things, it is universal, and it is infinite: we begin with one and can continue infinitely. The boundaries of the nations were fixed according to the number of the Jews; the greater the number of the Jews becomes the smaller will become the boundaries of the nations. A time will come when all nations will disappear and only the Jews will survive. A Jew is one that perceives Jehovah and identifies himself with Jehovah through the intellectual love of God. The whole human race is predestined to attain to this perception and to the intellectual love of God, and by this to become Jews. Then Jehovah will be one and His name will be one.

The Jews, therefore, have no cause to despair. Whatever may come to pass, the Jews will overcome all difficulties and obstacles

and will survive all their enemies, for they are the means through whom Jehovah realizes His purpose. Judaism involves all problems of human existence, and these problems will be solved only then when Judaism will realize its historic purpose. Judaism constitutes the Jewish question, and therefore the Jewish question involves all other questions of human existence. Spinoza's philosophy, being Judaism made explicit, will pave the way among the nations towards an understanding of Judaism and an appreciation of the historic function of the Jews. And, while until now the nations caught glimpses of divine light through single Jews, in the future the nations will receive the full divine light through the Jewish people.

FREE WILL OR DETERMINISM?

WALTER BERNARD

of Spinoza Institute of America

> *"To know this doctrine of the will is highly necessary both for philosophic speculation and for the wise ordering of life." — Ethics II, Prop.* 49.

The doctrine of Free Will is one of the most thorny problems of philosophy. Many philosophers, not being able to see more clearly than the great mass of mankind, are loath to abandon this grand doctrine of Free Will which they consider to be in line "with the dignity and importance of man," as the high-sounding phrase usually goes. By taking this view, however, they remove man from the universal causality permeating all beings and things. They thus consider him, in the words of Spinoza, as being "outside the sphere of nature,—as a kingdom within a kingdom."

Already the simple consideration that everything that is or takes place cannot—if we are not to assume a miracle—originate in itself or come out of nothing, but must, on the contrary, acknowledge a cause for its existence and its functions—already this simple and cogent consideration does away as with one sweep, with all pretensions to and arguments for a Free Will, for that non-existent pet-child of man's imagination and vanity.

But, one might say, does not our consciousness affirm the existence of a Free Will? Do we not feel daily, in many of our acts, that we can act as we want to, and that we are consequently free? Isn't our own consciousness dependable enough?

The answer to this is that it is not dependable; that mere consciousness of a certain state apart from reason constitutes no proof for the actuality of that state. Witness our many optical illusions. We have, furthermore, the consciousness attested to by all our senses that the earth is at complete rest and we have no sensible consciousness at all of the complexity and rapidity of motion with which the earth, and we with her, swing about in space. To rely

on the consciousness-argument is, therefore, to rely on something that is unreliable. Numerous other examples might be given which would still further illustrate this obvious fact.

It is not denied, however, that we have the consciousness of will. But the consciousness of Free Will is not the same as Free Will itself. The two should not be confused. If a stone, says Spinoza, while continuing in motion, were endowed with consciousness it "would believe itself to be completely free, and would think that it continued in motion solely because of its own wish. This is that human freedom which all boast they possess, and which consists solely in the fact that men are conscious of their own desire, but are ignorant of the causes whereby that desire has been determined. Thus an infant believes that it desires milk freely; an angry child thinks he wishes freely for vengeance, . . . a drunken man thinks, that from the free decision of his mind he speaks words, which afterward, when sober, would like to have left unsaid. — — — As this misconception is innate in all men it is not easily conquered." *

It is claimed, especially by those who look at the practical side of things that, to deny Free Will is to accept a fruitless, barren, and pernicious doctrine. It will be seen, however, that far from being so, the denial of Free Will has proven and will yet prove to be of immense practical significance to our daily life. Happily for us we now deny the doctrine of Free Will in many aspects of our life without perhaps knowing that we do so. Our educational practices, for instance, have changed for the better in the last few years precisely because we have consciously and unconsciously abandoned more or less the idea of Free Will.

"Free Will," translated into educational practice, means ineffectual preaching and moralizing, useless do's and dont's and "you mustn't do this," and "you oughtn't do that." The world has been preached to for hundreds of years from every possible angle and with the most idealistic words without any noticeable

*) In his "Lehre von den Geistigen und vom Volke" Constantin Brunner, in discussing the will, also draws especial attention to this very important difference between the consciousness of freedom and free will itself. In the very same place he gives us also the profound psychological explanation for the consciousness of freedom that accompanies all willing and acting. Due, however, to the limited scope of this article, we cannot here take up the discussion of this point.

improvement. To believe in Free Will in education or in self-education—which interests probably a great many more of us—is not to know oneself, and not to know man; and it is to believe that, in a given critical situation as e. g. during a violent passion, a man can act in many possible ways merely by calling upon his Free Will. Such a view, indeed, regards man as being outside the sphere of nature, and disregards the fact that he is, in most cases, a bundle of habits and subject to the deterministic influence of his past and present environment. Happily, in our educational practice we have come to realize more and more the inefficacy of preaching and the great efficacy and value of *habit-formation* and *character-training*. Good and useful habits are great assets to the life and character of a man. And habit-formation, mind you, is not based upon a non-existent Free Will, but upon *the idea of causality and determinism*. Certain acts and deeds repeated often enough will, in the course of time, become almost mechanical, automatic or "habitual." Our more important views, outlooks, dispositions and attitudes, because of the accumulative force of emphasis and repetition, become in time more or less *determinate,* fixed and stable, and this is indeed what is called *character*. The character of a person is the sum total, or rather the product primarily, to be sure, of his native tendencies, but, to a considerable extent also of the forces of his past and present environment—this term having here the widest possible connotation, including education, health-factors, climate, occupation, social milieu, and possibly other factors. A person's character may, therefore, be said to be the product of all those factors, the resultant of all those perceptible and imperceptible forces, the definite effect of definite and determined causes. The factor of heredity, *in itself causally determined,* naturally looms as the most important one of all since heredity would determine to a great extent the individual's relationship to those external factors we mentioned above, such as education, which primarily depends on one's native mental ability, occupation, social environment, etc. So that in a very true sense it has been said that a man's character is a man's fate. It should not be forgotten, however, that every act that we do, no matter how insignificant it be, every thought that we think, every feeling that we experience, be it ever so transitory, has its definite effect and influence, no matter how small it be, upon our entire life and being.

This brings us to a profounder insight into human nature, to a better understanding of ourselves, and it leads to momentous practical results, the full value of which will be realized perhaps only by the philosophically inclined individual, by the serious, thinking person that ever strives after self-education, self-mastery and self-perfection. *It is just because there is no Free Will,* just because there is no such miraculous power that will enable us to act in important situations, or in life in general as we want to, or as we should like to—that we must daily and often even hourly engage in those activities we should like to perfect ourselves in, strive after and endeavor to acquire in ethical behavior e. g.—that mastery and control of ourselves that we deem essential to our well-being. One might say that, just as we train ourselves for the various skills and aptitudes necessary in various trades and professions—taking, of course, into account one's native ability —we ought to train ourselves and our children as much as possible in the acquisition of beneficial habits of health and industry and of certain desirable attitudes towards our fellow-men, towards society and towards the pursuit of knowledge and truth.

William James, though probably not thinking at that time of the larger problem of Free Will, but very likely only of the deterministic nature of habit-formation, writes the following significant words: "Could the young but realize how soon they will become mere walking bundles of habits, they would give more heed to their conduct while in the plastic stage. We are spinning our own fates, good or evil, and never to be undone. Every smallest stroke of virtue or vice leaves its ever so little scar. The drunken Rip Van Winkle, in Jefferson's play, excuses himself for every fresh dereliction by saying: 'I won't count this time.' Well, he may not count it, and a kind Heaven may not count it, but it is being counted none the less. Down among his cells and fibres the molecules are counting it, registering it and storing it up to be used against him when the next temptation comes. Nothing we ever do is, in strict scientific literalness, wiped out."

This psychical determinism of which James speaks, works, of course, for both good and evil, and through knowledge and understanding we may be able to turn the forces and laws of nature to our advantage rather than to our disadvantage, as we already do, or endeavor to do in the physical sciences. The law of determinism, as opposed to a non-existent Free Will makes us realize

just this, that we cannot at any given moment, as was mentioned before, act freely, act according to our whims and fanciful wishes, but that, by our very nature and character, our acting, thinking, feeling is fixed and determined for good or evil. Very often, therefore, also for good. In speaking of useful habits James goes on to say: "As we become drunkards by so many separate drinks, so we may become authorities and experts in the practical and scientific spheres by so many separate acts and hours of work. Let no youth have any anxiety about the upshot of his education, whatever the line of it may be. If he keep faithfully busy each hour of the working day, he may safely leave the final result to itself. He can, with perfect certainty, count on waking up some fine morning to find himself one of the competent ones of his generation, in whatever pursuit he may hove singled out. Silently, between all the details of his business, the power of judging in all that class of matter will have built itself up within him as a possession that will never pass away. Young people should know this truth in advance. The ignorance of it has probably engendered more discouragement and faint-heartedness in youths embarking on arduous careers than all other causes put together."

With regard to ethical behavior, to the moderation and control of our emotions, Spinoza in the fifth book of the Ethics advises us in similar manner: "The best thing, then, we can bring to pass as long as we have no perfect knowledge of emotions, is to conceive some manner of living aright or certain rules of life, to commit them to memory, and to apply them continually to the individual thing which come in our way frequently in life, so that our imagination may be deeply affected with them." (Ethics V, 10).

But one might ask, isn't there a contradiction in this very advice of Spinoza's in that he asks and urges us to act in a certain commendable manner by which he, unwillingly perhaps, seems to imply that we do have the freedom to follow our choice and our will? Does it not seem that while we may have no freedom of will and action when we are dominated by a strong passion—yet in small and unimportant things of every day life we do have the ability to act without restraint and from freedom of choice?

To this we must answer emphatically that here again freedom of the will is an illusion. This can be readily seen when we realize that we always act because of some motive, otherwise there

is no sense in our acting altogether—and what is a motive? A motive is nothing else than the visualization of some interest or pleasure, or fear of displeasure which, while it is thus being visualized by the individual, is to that extent actually a present living force, a vital cause to determine the individual's action or lack of action. And when, as often happens, there are two or more motives that apparently are equally balanced so that it seems to us that we might do either this or that or the other thing, with the result that we are tortured by our indecision, and we finally, by an act of Free Will "make up our minds" to act in a definite way—when this happens it is because of the fact that our real interests are often not immediately apparent to us, that is the case, as Constantin Brunner says: "wenn das Sensitive noch nicht völlig heraus ins Intellektive gestiegen ist," or when the relative benefits of two or more possible actions have not, as yet, become clear to us. But as soon as it does become clear to us as to which is the more profitable course, we promptly act accordingly.

Similarly, there is no freedom of the will, as again there seems to be, when we act or endeavor to act in accordance with certain principles. By visualizing a better and nobler mode of living *the desire* is aroused in us to achieve that state. The desire is the active impelling force which determines us to strive for what we undestand to be good. Hence there is no contradiction in Spinoza's urging, as he does, to aspire after the more perfect life, which, as he shows us especially in the fifth book of the Ethics, is the life of reason and love of God and mankind.

The close, inner relationship between the desire and the idea of the object that we desire becomes especially clear when we realize with Spinoza "that an idea, in so far as it is an idea, involves affirmation or negation." This means that in the very idea that we have of an object there is included whether we do or do not affirm it as regards its truth. Also whether we approve or disapprove of it with regard to our personal interest. What we know to be good for us we cannot help desiring, and the opposite is true of what we know to be harmful to us. Willing, then, is included in the knowing. We might with equal right say that knowing is included in the Willing, since it is above all the element of pleasure or displeasure in an object that determines our deliberations and our choosing or rejecting it. As Spinoza expressed it: men's "decisions of the mind are nothing

save their desires." Knowing and Willing, then, clearly coincide. "Will and Intellect are one and the same thing." (Ethics II, Prop. 49, Corollary).

Another important criticism of the denial of Free Will comes from those who confuse determinism with fatalism. If everything is predetermined to happen in a certain manner, they argue, then there remains nothing for us human beings to do but to put our hands on our laps and to allow Fate to take care of everything. Striving, then, has no sense, thought is useless, and action becomes paralyzed.

The fatalistic viewpoint, however, is very crude and superficial. It fails to take account of the obvious fact that with human nature there are already given all those many forces, desires and appetites which determine one to act in the way one usually acts, so that everything pretty nearly remains as it is. It is predetermined or determined that man, for instance, shares most of his appetites with the animal: that he will get hungry, that he will have to have food, that he will procreate his kind, etc. Fatalism is thus seen to be shallow and flat, just because it really rejects true determinism as it is found in the reality of nature and because it assumes a determinism that nowhere exists.

In practical matters, as was mentioned before, our outlook on life is as a rule deterministic. We act in accordance with the causes and effects of things, and we think in causal relationship. *"Ratio siva causa,"* says Spinoza. Cause and effect become "ground and consequence" in rational and logical thought. Fortunately, in many instances, as we already saw in the case of recent educational practice, we tend to disregard the doctrine of Free Will in spite of our belief in it. Our attitude towards criminals, to give another example, has also undergone a profound change in recent years. This change is due mainly to our realization that, in the greatest number of cases, criminals do not become criminals out of their *own free will,* but that they become so due to the determining force of environment and circumstances, and we realize that, if these circumstances had been different, the individual might not have become a criminal at all. In our juvenile courts, in our reformatories for the young lawbreaker, in our more humane prisons where attempts are made to teach their inmates a useful trade, and to impart to them, in general, a more social attitude towards their fellowmen; and, in that which is

now called mental hygiene, we give visible and practical expression to this Spinozistic, deterministic view that human thoughts, emotions and actions are not free, but that they "follow from the same necessity and ability in nature as other individual things."

It would lead us too far, however, to discuss here either the many other advantages that the denial of Free Will bestows or might bestow upon the individual and upon society, or the equally great disadvantages and the physical and mental harm that the assumption of Free Will brings in its course. Think only of the innumerable, and often entirely useless suffering that pangs of remorse bring to human beings because of what they believe were "avoidable" mistakes or false steps that they have made in their lives. Believing in the power of their Free Wills there is always that question ceaselessly gnawing at their hearts: "Why didn't I act otherwise?"

Free Will is also implied as Brunner points out in our "Morality," which, as he uses the term, is the antithesis of ethics and ethical conduct. By presupposing Free Will and by misunderstanding the egotistical nature of man, our morality becomes, as Brunner has shown, a malignant tumor in our social life into which it brings immeasurable harm, discord, haughtiness, reciprocal hatred and cruelty.

Enough, we believe, has been said to show that, as Einstein remarked, "Man is not free in his thinking, feeling, and doing," but is "just as causally determined as are the stars in their motions."

Free Will is a non-entity. The inexorable laws of causality that permeate the infinite universe, also determine all things on this our earth, including man, and for this reason, also, the entirety of man, his physical as well as his psychical being.

WHY A SPINOZA INSTITUTE?

An address delivered by

HARRY WATON

on the occasion of the founding of the Spinoza Institute of America, December 18, 1927

We are a group of men interested in the philosophy of Spinoza. And your presence here indicates that you, too, are interested in this philosophy. Otherwise, you would not have been here now. In the philosophy of Spinoza, then, we have a common interest. This common interest can and should be made the basis for a joint endeavor to realize what would become a common aim, namely, to make the idea of the philosophy of Spinoza the guiding idea in the life of mankind. This is a daring and most ambitious aim—an aim, which though meritorious, seems to be impossible of realization. Indeed, how can this aim be realized? We are but a small group of men with limited means at our disposal, and mankind is so crudely materialistic. How can we undertake to transform mankind from crude materialists into noble idealists? You will therefore regard us as utopians, visionaries and dreamers. Yet, we are neither utopians, visionaries, nor dreamers, but we are realists in the fullest sense of the term. It is because we are realists that we have undertaken to realize this aim. This sounds paradoxical, yet, it is true. That you may perceive this truth, it is necessary to consider the following:

The realization of an aim—whatever be its nature—is organically and indissolubly bound up with history. It is, in fact, an organic part of history. History appertains to the essence and existence of mankind. The understanding of history should, therefore, be man's supreme concern. Yet, men entertain the most naive views about history. Some believe that history is entirely made by men; that men can make their own history as they please, and therefore, can realize any aim they want. Such naive notions about history can be entertained only by men that never seriously endeavored to realize any aim in life. These men do not know what it means to realize an aim, and therefore

do not know what history is. There are others, more rational, who believe that, though history is made by men, yet men do not make their own history out of the whole cloth; that they make their own history out of the given material conditions and in accordance with the natural order of things. These men, in taking up any aim, will first make sure that the material conditions require this aim, and that it can be realized in accordance with the natural order of things. Yet, experience shows that these men, notwithstanding their great knowledge, profound wisdom and penetrating insight into things, never realized their aims; that the results of their endeavors were usually different from what they had expected, and often even contrary to what they had anticipated. This should have caused rational men to suspect that there is in history something more than material conditions and a natural order of things.

Now, what is the truth about history? History is neither made by men, nor is it determined by the material conditions, nor does it proceed in accordance with the natural order of things. History is not a natural process. It is a transcendental process. History is made by destiny—a power that transcends infinitely the power and wisdom of men, and transcends the material conditions and the natural order of things. Out of the material conditions and upon the basis of the natural order of things, destiny makes through mankind history in accordance with its own purpose. In the realm of history, man can at most propose, but it is in the hands of God to dispose. Since men do not make their history, and since the realization of an aim is organically and indissolubly bound up with history, it is not in the power and knowledge of men to determine beforehand, whether a given aim will be realized or not. And history shows that aims, which at first seemed to be impossible of realization, were realized, while aims, which at first seemed to be easy of realization, were never realized. For this reason, we are not concerned about the question, whether the aim before us can and will be realized or not. We are concerned about something else. We are concerned about our duty—the duty dictated to us by our conscience and reason. Our conscience and reason dictate to us the plain duty to ourselves and others to endeavor to realize this aim—leaving to destiny to show us whether this aim is to be realized or not. By the fruit ye shall know. We shall know later by the results.

Now, whether mankind will ever clearly perceive what their destiny is, whether men will ever understand what role the material conditions play in history, and whether they will ever discover the truth about the natural order of things, or not; these are questions which must be left to future generations to answer. For the present we have another guide in life. We have an immediate and certain knowledge of what our conscience and reason dictate to us, and the dictates of our conscience and reason are the most certain and trustworthy guides in life. Therefore, in guiding ourselves by the dictates of our conscience and reason, we are more thoroughly realists than those that guide themselves by the material conditions and the natural order of things. Not we are utopians, visionaries and dreamers, but they are utopians, visionaries and dreamers.

Being realists, we have initiated a movement for the realization of the aim dictated to us by our conscience and reason, and that aim is, to make the idea of the philosophy of Spinoza the guiding idea in the life of mankind. The first step in the realization of this aim is the creation of an organization. We intend to call this organization, The Spinoza Institute of America. And we shall ask you to join this organization, and help us carry on the work before us. But, before you can and will definitely decide to join this organization, we must answer several questions that will naturally present themselves to you. The questions are:

First, what reason is there for this movement? Secondly, what will be the nature and function of the Spinoza Institute of America, which we intend to create? And, finally, what will the idea of Spinoza's philosophy accomplish? These questions I will answer in the order stated.

And, first, what reason is there for this movement? The reason arises out of the character of our age. We live in an age that is not merely materialistic, but is crudely materialistic. Materialism in itself is both rational and necessary. Materialism recognizes a universal condition to the existence of living beings; including man. Whatever may be the ultimate nature of life and its final destiny, in its bodily manifestation it depends upon the material means of life and must function in a material world. This is true of man as of other living beings. It is true that not on bread alone does man live, but it is equally true that without

bread man cannot live. To live, man must have the material means of life, and principally food, clothing, and shelter. These material means of life are necessary, not only that man may live, but also that he may satisfy his intellectual and spiritual requirements and make further progress. *Mens sana in corpore sano.* That man may have a sound mind, he must have a sound body; and that he may have a sound body, he must have the proper material means of life. All intellectual and spiritual progress presupposes a corresponding material progress, and the realization of the highest ideal is possible only upon a proper material basis. By taking thought, man cannot add a cubit to his intellectual and spiritual stature. To raise himself intellectually and spiritually, man must at the same time also raise his material foundation. Since this is a universal condition to the existence and progress of mankind, mankind should consciously recognize this condition and explicitly endeavor to comply with this condition. The conscious recognition of this universal condition to the existence and progress of mankind constitutes materialism. Materialism is, therefore, both rational and necessary.

But far different is the case of crude materialism. Crude materialism postulates that on bread alone does man live. This is an illusion. Life is more than meat, and man is more than body. Whatever biologic kinship there may be between man and the beast, man is essentially different from the beast. The essence of man is reason. It is reason that differentiates man from other living beings. Take away from man his reason, and he becomes worse than a beast, and then must perish. A beast can maintain itself as beast, because that is its nature; but man cannot maintain himself as a beast, because that is not his nature. Man can destroy himself, but he cannot change his nature. Noblesse oblige. The nobility of position in which man was placed devolves upon him the duty of nobility of conduct. Man was given reason that he should use it, and live in accordance with its light. Reason is the essence and the life of man. Reason should therefore be man's supreme concern. And, while endeavoring to secure the material means of life to satisfy his bodily needs, man should at the same time endeavor to secure the spiritual means of life to satisfy his reason. But crude materialism ignores reason and disregards its intellectual and spiritual requirements. Crude

materialism postulates that on bread alone does man live. Crude materialism is, therefore, an illusion.

Due to certain causes, which I shall presently point out, mankind abandoned itself entirely to crude materialism. Men now concentrate all their attention upon the material means of life, and direct all their endeavors towards the acquisition and accumulation of material wealth, at the same time ignoring reason and disregarding its intellectual and spiritual requirements. Men became mere mechanical automatons, indifferent to all intellectual and spiritual values. This is true, not only of the uneducated, but equally true also of the educated; and this is true, not only in the realm of action, but also in the realm of thought. Modern science and philosophy became crudely materialistic. Modern science and philosophy seek to interpret existence and life in terms of matter and motion, without at the same time knowing what matter and motion really are. In becoming crudely materialistic, modern science and philosophy lost their spirit. Whereas previously science and philosophy were inspirations to mankind, now they depress the spirit of mankind. Modern science and philosophy are cynical and pessimistic. They take, in sober earnest, the cynical and pessimistic ideas of old Koheleth. They say with Koheleth, for that which befalleth the sons of men also befalleth the beasts; even one fate befalleth them; as one dieth, so dieth the other; yea, they have all the spirit, so that man hath no preeminence above the beast; for all is vanity. And this has become the universal attitude of mankind. Even in those cases in which cultured men do recognize a distinction between man and the beast, and do seem to appreciate the intellectual and spiritual values, they appreciate them, not because they are conducive to intellectual and spiritual growth, but because they can be exploited for material purposes. They pursue science, art, literature and philosophy, not that through the exercise and discipline of their reason they may acquire a mastery over themselves and over the conditions of existence, but that they may relapse into a *Nirvanic ataraxia,* that they may lull themselves into an intellectual and spiritual sleep. Now, man has not only a human nature, which he cannot change; but man has also a human destiny, which he cannot evade. To live in accordance with his nature and to realize his destiny, man must perpetually endeavor to rise to ever higher intellectual and spiritual perfection. But the moment man set-

tles down to enjoy material comfort, the moment man ceases to strive after higher intellectual and spiritual perfection, the moment man is content to vegetate upon the intellectual and spiritual achievements of former generations, that moment man dooms himself to degeneration and extinction.

Since mankind disregard their nature and destiny and abandon themselves to crude materialism, they must suffer disastrous consequences. This is inevitable. When men abandon the light of reason, they must dwell in darkness; when men forsake the fountain of their essence and life, they must perish. And mankind are conscious of this inevitability. This consciousness manifests itself, on the one hand, in a foreboding of an impending world crisis, and, on the other hand, in an indifference to the future and even to life itself. In some this consciousness is explicit, in others it is partially explicit, and in the masses it is implicit. Men of thought all over the world perceive that mankind is drawn by an irresistible power towards the maelstrom of destruction, and warn mankind against the impending danger. Again, the men of action—leaders in politics, industry and finance—perceive semi-explicitly the impending world crisis, and anticipate it. This they do by their feverish spread of world imperialism, the creation of universal militarism, and the preparation of munitions for a world war. Notwithstanding the tall talk about world peace and disarmament, the races and the nations vie with one another in the production of the munitions of war. This they do ostensibly to avert the impending world crisis, but in fact by this they only expedite the advent of the impending world crisis. In the masses this consciousness is still implicit; yet, he that has eyes to see, can see the plain truth. The masses manifest this consciousness in their indifference to the future, to life itself, and to all intellectual and spiritual values. Indifference is the mother of chaos and night. *Carpe diem,* seize the opportunity to enjoy today, for tomorrow we shall die. This has become the attitude of the masses. Jazz and the movies became the Alpha and Omega of their intellectual and spiritual interests. Even with relation to the material needs of life they became indifferent. They no longer care to exert themselves to improve their material conditions. They have become spendthrifts and spend all their earnings. Whatever may rightly be said against the passion to accumulate money, it is clear that money in itself is not an evil,

that it was not invented by the devil. Money was brought out by history in answer to a material necessity. And, until mankind will evolve a system of material relations that will dispense with the use of money, man must value money and use it rationally. Man cannot live from hand to mouth. Man must think of the future, and provide for the future. Man must also think of the uncertainties. But the present generation does not think of the future, and does not concern itself about the uncertainties of life. It lives from hand to mouth. It is true that the present generation wants money most urgently, perhaps more urgently than former generations wanted money. But, whereas former generations wanted money that they might thereby the better provide for the future of themselves and their children, the present generation wants money only to spend it, and it spends money faster than it earns it.

All this indicates that mankind is conscious of an impelling world crisis. Why should men think of the future, when there is no future; why should they exert themselves to rise intellectually and spiritually when tomorrow they will die? Now, what is the cause of this change of attitude of mankind? Is it due to some accident, or to the perversity of human nature? The answer is, this is due neither to an accident, nor to the perversity of human nature, but to an historic cause. The present order of society is dying and passing away. And this manifests itself in the attitude of mankind. Now, an order of society, like a man, does not die all at once. The process of death proceeds in an inverse order to the order of the process of life. Life begins with the creation of a body, then it endows the body with various faculties. It begins with the sense perceptions, then in succession it endows the body with understanding, judgment, intuition, and finally reason. Reason is the last and highest faculty that man acquires. But, when man is about to die, the process of dissolution proceeds in an inverse order. At first, reason leaves the man, then intuition leaves him, then judgment leaves him, then the understanding leaves him, and then the senses leave him, and finally life itself leaves him. This is equally true of an order of society. As mankind is the embodiment of the order of society, the dying and passing away of the order of society manifests itself in the spiritual and intellectual dying and passing away of mankind. This is the reason why mankind already lost their reason and

intuition; they can no longer use their reason, and they can no longer intuitively perceive the future and the intellectual and spiritual values essential to their existence and progress. Mankind are fast losing their judgment and understanding. This is the reason why mankind abandoned itself entirely to crude materialism. Crude materialism is the manifestation of a society that has lost its reason and intuition. The dissolution of the present order of society is therefore impending. What form this dissolution will assume does not concern us now. What concerns us is this. In the face of this situation, what should we do? Should we resign to the inevitable? Well, those in whom reason and intuition are already dead, may resign to the inevitable, for they are essentially already dead. But we, in whom reason and intuition still live and function, we cannot resign. What, then, should we do? In this situation there is left for us but one thing to do, and that is to listen to the voice of our conscience and reason. And our conscience and reason dictate to us the duty to ourselves and others to initiate a movement to regenerate the human race, to win men back to reason, and to teach them to appreciate the intellectual and the spiritual values. This is the reason for this movement. Thus I have answered the first question.

The first step in the realization of this movement is to create an organization. We intend to call this organization, The Spinoza Institute of America. This brings us to the second question, namely, What will be the nature and function of this institute? Its nature and function will be what its name implies. It will be a Spinoza institute, because its purpose will be to make the idea of the philosophy of Spinoza the guiding idea in the life of mankind. I say, the idea of the philosophy of Spinoza, and not the philosophy of Spinoza, for the following reason. A philosophy, may it be ever so profound, universal and sublime—as the philosophy of Spinoza indeed is—is a closed system. It is closed in its language and in its form. As such, a philosophy cannot grow and develop to serve the purposes of a growing and developing mankind. But an idea of a philosophy is a spiritual reality, and, like all spiritual realities, grows and develops with the growth and development of mankind. The letter killeth, but the spirit giveth life. What is necessary is not that mankind should recognize the merits of Spinoza's philosophy and apply it to life, but that mankind should identify itself with the idea of Spinoza's

philosophy and live in accordance with its light. For this reason we want it to be a Spinoza institute. It will be a Spinoza institute, because our aim must be as fundamentally deep and universally comprehensive as is the idea of the philosophy of Spinoza. It is necessary, in the light of this idea, to crystalize a true philosophy of history, a rational theory of education, a fundamental interpretation of the facts of science, and an adequate idea of the nature of man and the destiny of mankind.

Next, it will be a Spinoza institute, and not a Spinoza society. A society is personal, while an institute is impersonal. A society is limited by the character and the interests of its members, while an institute transcends these limitations. A society is concerned only about the immediate needs of its members, while an institute is concerned about the future of mankind. For this reason, a society is passive, while an institute is active. The Spinoza institute, which we intend to create, will embrace all members of society, regardless of creed, race, color, sex, opinion, and place of residence, it will comprehend all functions of society, the material, intellectual, and spiritual, and will concern itself about the future as well as the present.

Finally, it will be a Spinoza Institute of America. This does not mean that it will limit itself to this country and will concern itself only about the American people. Far from it. The Spinoza Institute of America wil extend its function all over the world, it will form organic connections with similar organizations wherever created, and will cooperate with all men and women, wherever they may be. But it will be a Spinoza Institute of America, because it will derive its nourishment from the American soil and will grow out of the American people. Thus I have answered the second question.

And now we come to the final question. What can the idea of the philosophy of Spinoza accomplish? It will acccomplish what is necessary to our aim. The impending world crisis will result from the racial, national and class divisions of mankind and their perpetual struggles against one another. It is necessary, not only that mankind be brought back to reason, but also that mankind be unified into one historic reality. This can be accomplished by the idea of the philosophy of Spinoza. To perceive this, we must go to the root of the matter.

St. Paul said: We know in part, and we prophesy in part; but

when that which is perfect is come, then that which is in part is done away. Mankind were divided into antagonistic races, nations and classes because they knew only in part and they prophesied in part. Mankind must be made to know perfectly the whole. This can be accomplished only by reason.

There was a time when reason was at one with itself. The light of reason was yet undifferentiated. Reason then comprehended all functions of mankind, the material, intellectual and spiritual. But a time came when this had to change. Reason, like any other reality of existence, had to go through a process of evolution. Now, the two essential characteristics of evolution are differentiation and integration. Reason began to differentiate its functions, and in time became distinct and separated from one another. Since reason is the essence of mankind, the distinct functions of reason found their embodiment in distinct portions of mankind. Some limited themselves to the material functions, others limited themselves to the intellectual functions, and others limited themselves to the spiritual functions. Each portion of mankind then began to know only in part and prophesied only in part. Now, the essece of any reality of existence is the endeavor to persist in its individual existence. But, as Spinoza says, determinatio est negatio. The self-assertion of any reality implies a negation of other realities. The self-assertion of each portion of mankind implied a negation of the other groups of mankind. This resulted in a struggle among the various portions of mankind against one another. Hence the history of mankind is nothing else than the continuous struggle among races, nations and classes.

Since reason was the cause of all this division and struggle among men, reason must overcome that division and struggle. Now, as I stated before, the essential characteristics of evolution are differentiation and integration. At the same time that the members of an organism become differentiated in form and function, they also integrate. After the functions of reason have become differentiated, they must now become integrated. And, since reason is the essence of mankind, this integration of the functions of reason must bring about an integration of mankind. This is now taking place. This manifests itself in various ways. On the one hand, we have the great international labor movement, whose historic aim is to abolish all racial, national and class divisions of mankind and all antagonism and struggle. On the other hand, it

manifests itself in the endeavor of all enlightened members of society to create a social power that shall transcend all races, nations and classes, and shall consolidate the whole human races into one historic reality. This universal endeavor to unify the human race is but the manifestation of the process of unification that goes on among the functions of reason. It is the work of reason itself.

Now, reason speaks through ideas. An idea differs essentially from a truth. Truth is the agreement between our cognitions and the realities of existence. There can therefore be as many truths as there are realities in existence. Now, if the realities of existence had always remained the same in form and in their interrelations our cognitions agreeing with them would always remain true. But the realities of existence perpetually change. The cognitions that agreed with the realities before they changed no longer agree with them after they changed. It follows, therefore, that eternal truths are impossible. Nevertheless, there are eternal truths, and these are ideas. Now, an idea is not only eternal, but it is also universal. Take, in illustration, the idea of evolution. This idea tells us that everything in existence perpetually changes, but the law of evolution itself never changes. This is an eternal law, that is, it is an eternal idea. Again, while there may be as many truths as men have cognitions that agree with the realities of existence, there is only one idea of evolution. This idea is eternal and comprehends all realities of existence.

Now, the idea of the philosophy of Spinoza is an eternal and universal idea. It is the idea of reason itself. Spinoza's philosophy is not a synthesis of truths, but is the revelation of an eternal and universal idea. This idea comprehends all functions of reason and comprehends the whole human race together with the whole of existence. Now, an eternal and universal idea is not the product of an individual mind, nor even is it a product of the collective mind of the human race. Such idea is the product of universal reason, the reason that pervades the whole universe and determines all processes of existence. Spinoza was only the means through whom universal reason spoke to mankind. Until now, this idea gestated in the minds of individual thinkers. Now the time has arrived for this idea to come out into the world and function through the whole human race. And, by identifying ourselves with the eternal and universal idea of the philosophy of Spinoza, we are in fact identifying ourselves with universal reason itself. Our aim is not

the invention of individual minds. It is the aim of universal reason. Reason speaks through ideas, because reason itself is an idea of God. An idea and reason, therefore, are identical. Since reason is the essence of man, it means that an idea is the essence of man, of history and of movements. Mankind lost faith in religion and former ideals and ideas. To regenerate mankind, we must first project an idea, which shall be the essence of the new movement and the new humanity. Spinoza's idea is therefore essential.

Universal reason is the destiny of human existence and history. It is destiny that speaks through us. Since this is the work of destiny, nothing can prevent the realizaion of the purpose of destiny. And, though we are at present small in number and limited in means, in time we shall become great in number and great in power. Hence, in undertaking to realize this aim, we are neither utopians, visionaries, nor dreamers. Thus I have answered the third question.

If, notwithstanding all I have said, you are still unconvinced, I must ask you to take on trust our assurance that, if you will join the Spinoza Institute of America, and together with us study and work, you will become as thoroughly convinced of the truth I have revealed to you as we are convinced. But, you will say, why should you take on trust our assurance? Twofold is my answer. First, the fact that you are already interested in the philosophy of Spinoza—as your presence here indicates—ought to be the basis for your trust in our assurance; for, we do not ask you to trust our philosophy, but we ask you to take on trust the philosophy of Spinoza. And this you can readily do, since you already have a high opinion of the philosophy of Spinoza. Secondly, I ask indeed very little of you. I do not ask you to stake your fortune, or to change radically your mode of life, in reliance upon our assurance. All I ask you is to join the Spinoza Institute of America, study and work with us. This will not cost you much money worth speaking of, it will not devolve upon you duties that will interfere with your other duties of life, and it will not rob you of time which you may otherwise spend more agreeably. If, after a short trial, you will find that we have not made good our assurance, you will then be at liberty to sever all relations with the Spinoza Institute of America, and we shall part as friends. On the other hand, if you will convince yourselves— as I am certain that you will—that we have even more than made good our assurance,

you will then be grateful to destiny for having brought you together with us.

In deciding to join the Spinoza Institute of America, you do not have to speculate about conditions, probabilities and possibilities. All that you have to do is to consult your own conscience and reason. And your conscience and reason will dictate to you the plain duty to affiliate with us in the endeavor to realize the aim before us. Join the Spinoza Institute of America. Study with us and work with us. Work while you have the light. This is a work that most wonderfully compensates the worker. You will enjoy the work, while working, and you will enjoy the work still more, when it will bring forth an abundance of noble fruit.

The Philosophy of the Kabbalah

By HARRY WATON

THE Kabbalah is the esoteric doctrine of the Jews, which came down to us from the most ancient times, and which embodies the numerous systems of thought crystallized by the universal mind of mankind. The Kabbalah is a trinity of soul, body and garment. The garment consists of religious practices whose aim it is to bring man into harmony with God and the order of existence. The body consists of metaphysical ideas about God, existence and man. The soul consists of a philosophy that reveals the purpose of creation, the genesis, order and destiny of existence, the nature and destiny of man, and shows the dependence of the phenomenal practical world upon the transcendental noumenal world.

The Kabbalah is embodied in three principal works: Sepher Yetziroh, Zohar and Tikune Zohar, and numerous commentaries on these three standard works. Since these works had been closed, most Kabbalists concerned themselves only about the body and the garment of the Kabbalah, wholly neglecting its soul. For this reason, the Kabbalah is known to be but a mystical doctrine that seems to have no relation to the phenomenal practical world, and no bearing upon the earthly existence of man.

In this book, for the first time, the philosophy of the Kabbalah is revealed, and now it clearly appears that in universality and sublimity the Kabbalah transcends all other systems of thought crystallized by metaphysicians and philosophers, and in depth and essence it surpasses all sciences, modern as well as ancient. What the modern scientists are seeking was long since discovered by the Kabbalists, and what the modern relativists are vainly endeavoring to solve the Kabbalah solved long ago.

Besides bringing to light this profound, sublime and universal philosophy, the author of this book has another and higher aim, and that is to reveal the nature, course and destiny of history. Science is great, philosophy is high, metaphysics is sublime; but greater, higher and sublimer than all is history. Science serves the immediate practical purposes of man, philosophy satisfies the requirements of his reason, and metaphysics gratifies the demands of his intuition, but history comprehends the whole man, and serves him in all his aspects. Man's existence and destiny are bound up with history. In this book, for the first time, an idea of universal history is presented, in the light of which the book of history is revealed, so that one can read future history as well as past history with perfect understanding.

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THE PHILOSOPHY OF SPINOZA

By HARRY WATON

If Einstein, as President Butler said, is the monarch of the mind, then Spinoza is the monarch of the intellect. In the realm of the intellect—the union of the highest intuition and the most explicit reason—Spinoza has no equal. His philosophy is the profoundest and sublimest system of intuitive and rational thinking that the human mind has crystallized. Spinoza's philosophy was not only the product of great and persistent mental effort, but it was principally a direct and clear seeing into the Absolute, Infinite, Eternal and Universal; a profound and clear comprehension of the essence, nature and order of existence, and a penetrating insight into the nature of man and the human mind. For this reason Spinoza's philosophy cannot be understood by mere study: one must bring to the study of this philosophy a high intuition and explicit reason, and one must spend many years in intimate communion with the mind of Spinoa, to be able to grasp and understand the infinite and sublime thoughts and ideas which he has embodied in his philosophy.

Since the days of Spinoza, most of his works were translated into many languages, and many books were written about his philosophy; but no one has made an attempt to reveal to mankind the philosophy itself. The present work is the first attempt to open the works of Spinoza, and to reveal to mankind his philosophy. He, to whom philosophy is not merely an amusement and an ornament, but to whom it is "a lamp unto his feet and a light unto his path," will find the present work of great use and value. It will help him to enter into the sacred realm of the profoundest and sublimest thoughts crystallized by the universal mind of mankind, and it will enable him to commune with Spinoza and understand his philosophy.

The present work contains a new translation, exposition and elucidation of the two works of Spinoza: De Intellectus Emendatione (The Freeing of the Intellect) and Cogitata Metaphysica (Metaphysical Reflections). The text is explained, the significance of the profound ideas is brought to light, and the essence and aim of the whole philosophy are pointed out. This present work will prepare the student to take up the study of The Ethics—the greatest achievement of the human intellect. The author of the present work has spent many years on the study of Spinoza's philosophy, and the present work is the product of profound reflection on the problems of existence. It is for the student of the present work to judge of its merit. But, whatever be the judgment, there can be but one opinion, namely: it is the first work of its kind in the realm of philosophy.

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